DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS NUMBER

THE CAPTAIN

A MAGAZINE FOR BOYS & "OLD BOYS."

EDITOR, "THE OLD FAG." ATHLETIC EDITOR, C.B. FRY.

6d.

Vol. XII. No. 69. DECEMBER, 1904.

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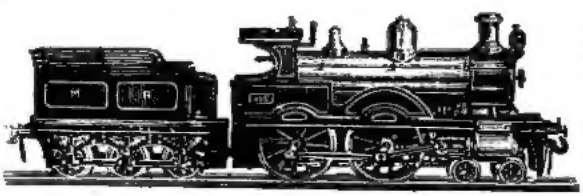

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SPECIAL NOTICE.

Enclosed with this month's *Captain* will be found a small special list of Bargains in Sets, Packets, &c. We strongly advise all Collectors to carefully peruse this, as it will pay well to send for any stamps they are in want of, while they are to be purchased on such advantageous terms.

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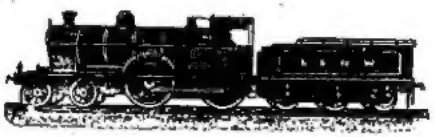

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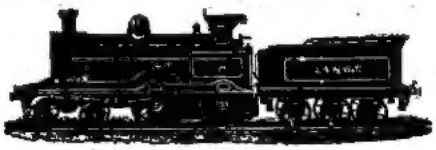

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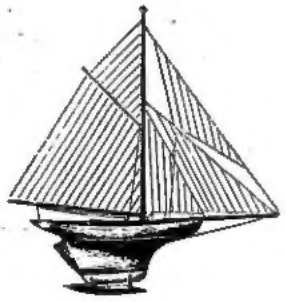

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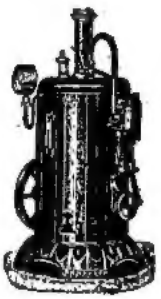

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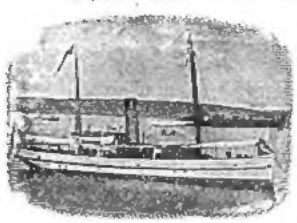

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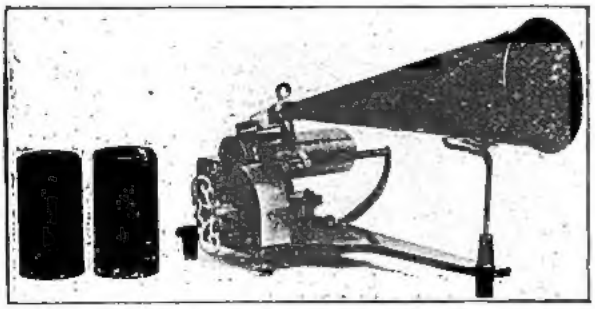

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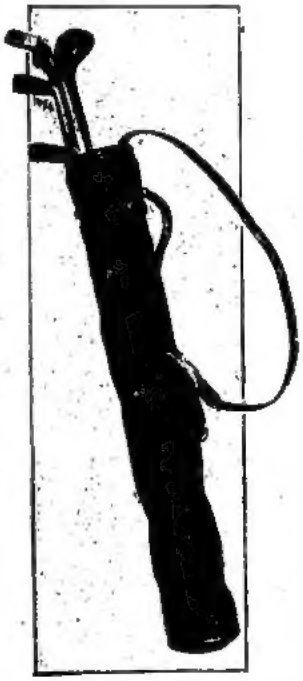

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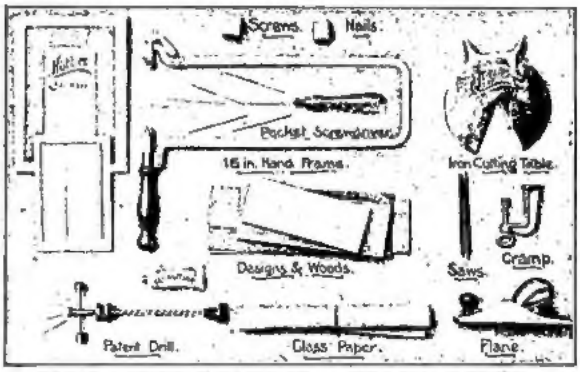

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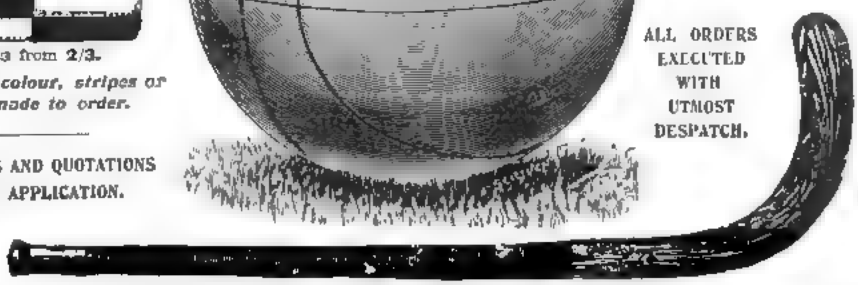

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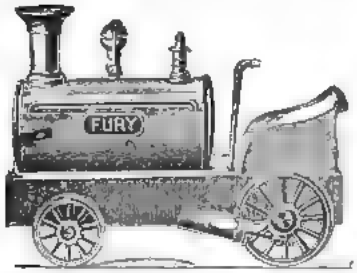

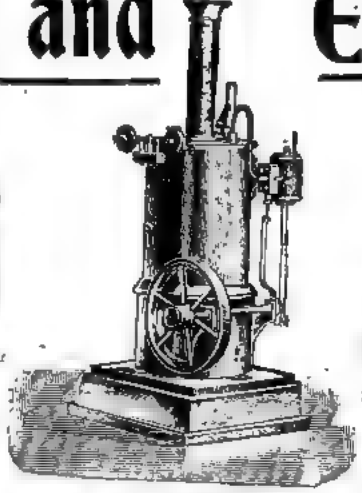

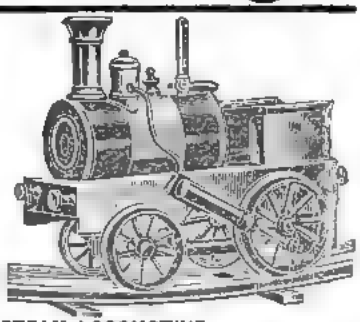

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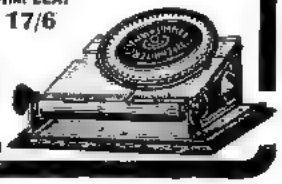

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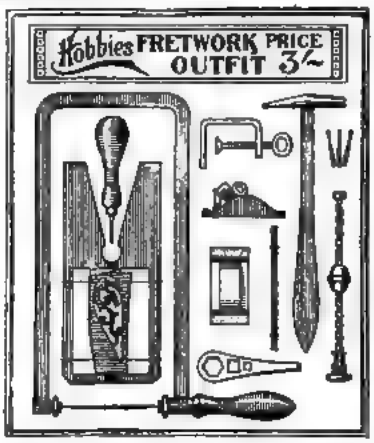

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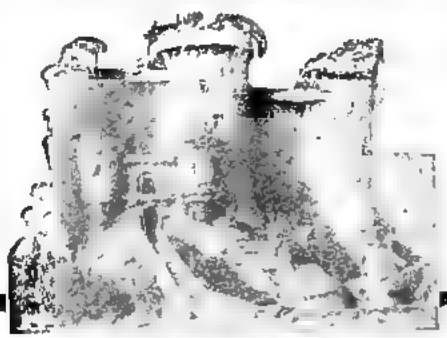

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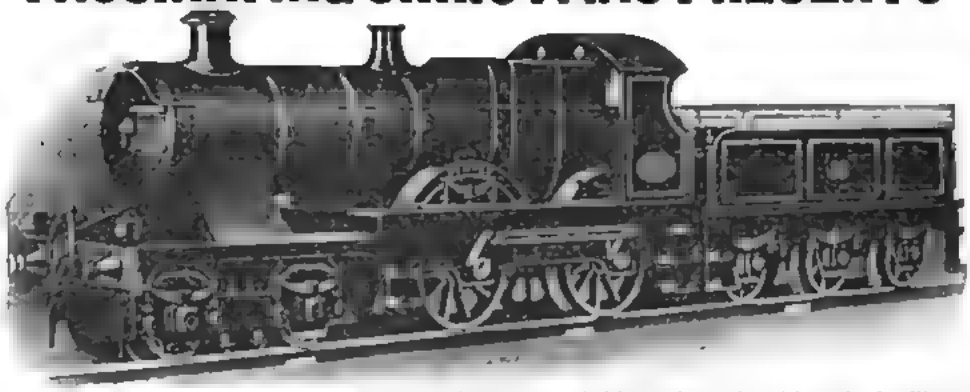

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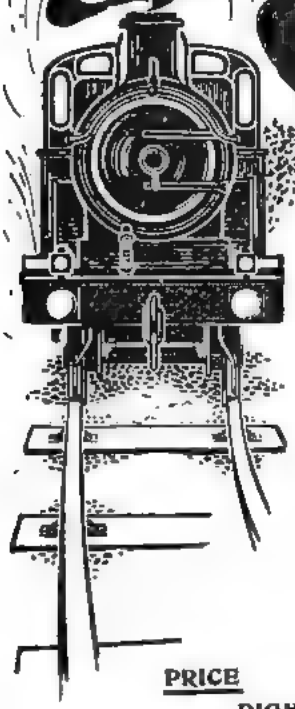

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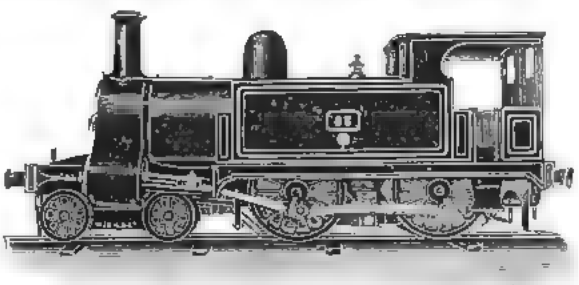

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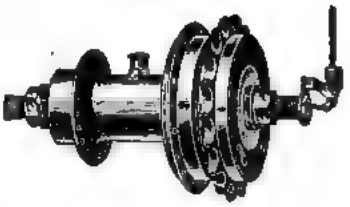

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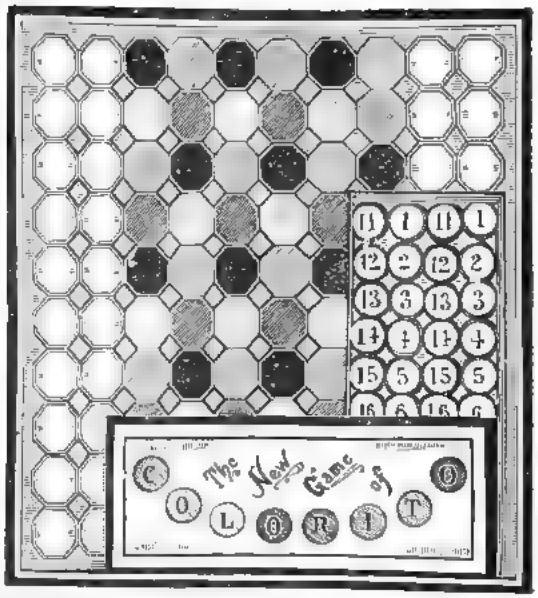

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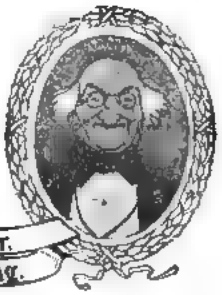

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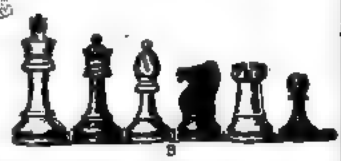

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[To Face back of Front.

CHRISTMAS CLOUDS.

Gobbler: "I don't at all like the look of the sky to-night, Maria!"

THE PASSAGE OF THE STYX.

By E. H. S. BARNES-AUSTIN.

Illustrated by F. S. Hodgson.

AS I write, the whole scene flashes back on me with the vividness of yesterday, though more than a score of years have elapsed since I and two others faced death in one of its most forbidding forms, when, but for the mercy of Providence, I should have shadowed my life with the awful reproach of having sent a fellow creature to an untimely end by an act of incredible folly and amazing thoughtlessness

There must be many old Wroxhamites living now who will have no difficulty in supplying the name of the school which, for obvious reasons, I have suppressed, together with those of the *dramatis personæ* who appear in these pages. The story I am going to tell is a classic legend in the annals of Wroxham, though now for the first time committed to paper.

This event, which nearly put a period to three lives, occurred in the early 'eighties, when, as a youth of sixteen, and wearing my cap for the cricket and Rugby teams, I had formed an estimate of my

Google

importance which subsequent events induce me to believe I shared alone.

Among the new fellows at the beginning of the summer term in '83 was a lad named Vivian Stapleton, of about fourteen years of age, and backward for a boy, at boys' sports and pursuits, at that. We soon learned, after the brief and very direct course of questioning in which boys excel, that the new arrival had been educated at home, and that this was his first experience of the tribulations of school life. When we further learned, from incautious admissions, that Stapleton had been educated with his sister, and that both had studied with the same tutor, we were loud in our expressions of scorn and contempt. At a later period we knew that a spinal weakness had peremptorily dictated home supervision, careful nursing, and the most watchful care.

"Why, I don't believe he knows a cricket bat from a stump!" exclaimed Miles junior, a precocious youth of thirteen. "Here, young 'un, what is the difference between 'cover point' and 'mid off'?"

"My! ain't he pink and white, like my sister's doll!" remarked another. "Do you know, you fellows, he's got a sunshade in his play-box, and he ain't never to go out in the sun, because of his com-plex-i-on."

"Yes," put in a third would-be wit, "and Miss Martin (the matron) told me that a beautiful glass case, same as you put over ornaments, is coming for him to-morrow, and that he is to be kept in it, and only to be shown to visitors as the pattern kid of the school."

"Is it alive?" asked Hedley, the wag of the top-dormitory cubicles. "'Thou comest in such questionable shape,'" he quoted, affecting an exaggerated ecstasy of terror whereat, of course, the others laughed.

"Here, stop your rotting, you young ass!" cried a voice we all knew, and the next moment Hedley was sent flying, while Macdonald, one of the prefects, descended, as Walgrave afterwards poetically put it, "like a wolf on the fold," scattering the crowd of tormentors right and left.

"I'm keeping an eye on this chap for a day or two, until he knows the ropes," he informed us. "So if I find any of you booby-baiters carrying this game too far, some of you will want something softer than a form to sit on for a day or two. I don't speak twice—remember that!"

We did. Everyone liked and respected "Mac" for his fearlessness, his good nature, his strong sense of justice, and his hatred of bullying.

Although Stapleton slept in my dormitory—which was in reality a succession of cubicles—and was also a member of my form, the fifth, I saw but little of him for the next two or three weeks. To our surprise he turned out to be, for his years, one of the cleverest boys in the "house"—as the school was termed by Wroxhamites. His education had been conducted on lines in which thoroughness was the first consideration; and this, superadded to great natural ability and a love of study, placed him very easily first among boys senior to himself in age and standing. I fear that jealousy had something to do with the dislike I soon began to feel for the new boy. Hitherto I had been *facile princeps* in Latin verse and Greek construe, but I had to take a back seat in view of the new arrival. Stapleton was by temperament a poet, and his gifts in this direction were really marked; in consequence, his verse outshone mine as the moon the stars. While mine was commended, his was praised, and—as I know now, but was too conceited then to comprehend—justly so; for, while my lines were manufactured more or less laboriously and were only mechanically correct in quantities, his were spontaneous, technically perfect, and touched with the divine afflatus of true poetry. Then, again, in history I had always held my own, and a good deal more, but here once more I was at a disadvantage, for, while I knew dates, and the chronological sequence of events, Stapleton could trace from these the various currents of political feeling, national aspirations, or personal animosities and ambitions, which afterwards bore fruit in the history of the nation, and influenced its destiny for good or evil. In plain words he was a student, I—merely a "sap." So, take it altogether, as the old phrase has it, my nose was put out of joint, and though I wouldn't allow the true reason of my dislike for the newcomer, I was nevertheless determined to be even with him for my ignominious deposition and defeat.

The natural consequence of this state of mind may be easily imagined. I regarded Stapleton's acquirements with a jaundiced eye, and never forbore the ready sneer, either in or out of season, for everything he said or did. Yet, so far, no good opportunity for paying off old scores had presented itself in a really practicable shape. At last, one day, in a moment of inspiration, the idea

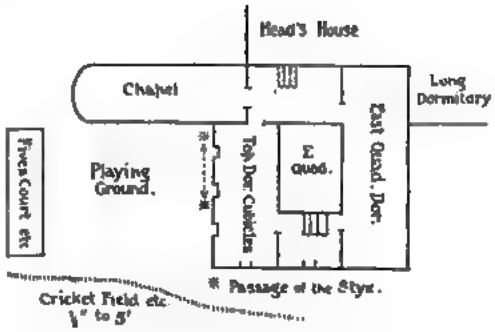
for which I had been searching flashed upon me—though Heaven knows the terrible consequences of my plan were not even remotely foreseen.

Vivian Stapleton, like all artistic and highly-strung individuals, was naturally of a nervous, excitable disposition, and this made him at once shy in manner and far less physically confident and daring than boys of his age usually are. Not that he was by any means a coward, but the malady from which he had suffered had necessarily precluded him from trying his muscles and nerves in the sports and pastimes with which the average English boy is familiar. He had never played cricket and football, done "gym," climbed, fought, swung, ridden, or participated in the hundred-and-one other athletic joys of boyish existence. He had been pitch-forked almost from the life of an invalid into the rough-and-tumble existence of a public school, with no useful previous experience to help in shielding him from the unsparing ridicule of his fellows. At first, therefore, so far from gaining confidence, he lost what little he possessed, and probably held a far lower estimate of his own powers than anyone else in the whole school.

And now for my plan.

To understand this, it is necessary that I should give a brief description of the structure of the building itself. The house was about three hundred years old, built of red brick, and some three stories in height, with mullioned windows containing quaint latticed panes of glass, which took strange molten glories in the rays of the setting sun. The school was built in two quadrangles, of which the extreme sides looked out respectively on the village street to the west, and on the east, where I slept, on the playground, the fives courts, and the playing fields beyond. Ours was known as the "Top Dormitory." The following plan will make the design sufficiently clear to the reader. The Head's and masters' rooms lay in the wing connecting the east and west quads.

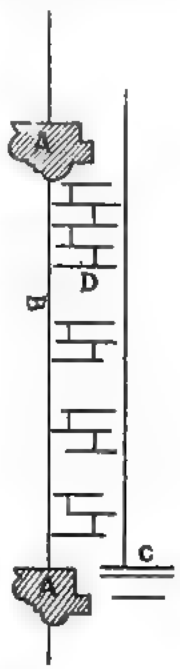
I have said the windows were large, with fine stone mullions, and of these there were six in our dormitory, three facing east, two west, and one north, the two former looking out respectively on the playground on the one side, and on the inside of the quad. on the other. Now, just below the level of the sill was what is termed, I believe, in architecture, "a string course"—that is, a line of stonework let into the brick wall, and pro-



jecting about four inches from the face thereof, while about five feet above was a similar course, running parallel to the one below. To understand exactly how these courses were shaped, I give a line-drawing in section beneath.

Now it had happened that a few days before the end of the Easter term I had undertaken, in a spirit of foolish bravado, to get out of my cubicle window and, with my finger-tips resting on the top stone course, and with my feet on the lower one, to work my way sideways and enter the next window, some twelve feet away. When I inform my readers that a sheer drop of sixty feet to the playground would be the penalty of a single slip or false step they will understand the mad hardihood of my idiotic proceeding. I have only this to state in my favour, that many years' experience of climbing the face of my native Cornish cliffs had so steadied my head and braced my nerves that to me, personally, the task was not nearly so dangerous or trying as it seemed to the beholders.

Well, I carried through my self-appointed feat to the general admiration, but not emulation, of my comrades—only one other successfully



A A. Stone Course.
D. Outside face of Wall.
C. Sill Level
D. Main Wall.

essaying the perilous journey. This was my school chum and neighbour at home, a boy named Penruddock, one who now wears over his gallant heart the most coveted decoration the British Army can bestow. "Pen"—to give him the abbreviation by which he was generally known—was a cool, clear-headed, sturdy specimen of British boyhood; one not to be easily daunted or beaten by difficulties of any kind; yet he confessed to me afterwards, in the strictest confidence, that had he fully appreciated what the feat was like in actual performance he would never have essayed it—no, not at the price of a five pound tip.

The reader will, by the light of the foregoing, have made a shrewd guess at the nature of the plan I had matured—namely, to first perform and then challenge young Stapleton to essay "The passage of the Styx," as Penruddock called it, and turn his foregone refusal to my own advantage and his discomfiture.

Accordingly, imbued with the idea of taking young Stapleton down a peg, I won the reluctant Penruddock to my side, and being assured of the co-operation of the rest of the "Top," eager for the fun, and all too willing to bear a hand at the "roasting" of young "Sappy," as he was called, I impatiently awaited the evening to set fire to the train I had so carefully laid.

Macdonald, as prefect of the Top, was supposed to keep order, prevent bullying, horseplay, &c., and to exercise a general supervision over the boys while they "went to earth," as the school phrase had it. But, as a matter of fact, Mac. seldom put in an appearance until he came to bed, which was generally about eleven o'clock—his duties tacitly devolving on myself in his absence, as the senior and strongest boy in the room. So, as a rule, we were moderately safe from any interference from him until that hour.

As soon as chapel was over that evening we hurried far more quickly than was our wont to the Top. Stapleton slept in the cubicle adjoining mine, and "Pen" on the other side of his. It had been arranged that one of the other boys should introduce the subject—the development being left as chance and circumstances should direct.

"Hullo, Stapleton," said Copley, the decoy in question, "it's about time you were initiated into the mysteries of the Styx. Every fellow who is a 'Topper' is expected to show his pluck by making the passage, or is looked upon as a frightful outsider."

"What do you mean?" asked Stapleton, regarding him somewhat doubtfully, and evidently suspicious of a sell.

Copley explained with artistic carelessness, but Stapleton evidently thought he was being "had."

"I suppose you think it is funny to try and make me believe such rot," he said. He had picked up some words of schoolboy slang, and used them with quite perceptible pride.

"Rot!" repeated Copley, with assumed indignation. "Because you've spent all your life in a nursery, playing with girls and dolls, you think everyone is as great a sawney as yourself. Here, Pen!"

This was Penruddock's cue. He came out of the adjoining cubicle half undressed.

"What's the row?" he asked.

"Oh, here's Miss Stapleton won't believe what I've been telling her about the passage of the Styx," replied Copley. "He'll say there's no Dante next, I suppose!"

Stapleton liked Penruddock, and the feeling was mutual. I am sure that, could he have done so without offending me, the latter would have withdrawn from a position which was at once both false and dishonourable; but a mistaken feeling of loyalty forced him to back me up. For Copley, however, he entertained no such regard, and was not, therefore, averse to giving that young hopeful a good setting down.

"Well, show him yourself," he grumbled; "he'll believe you then!" And he made as if he were going back into his cubicle.

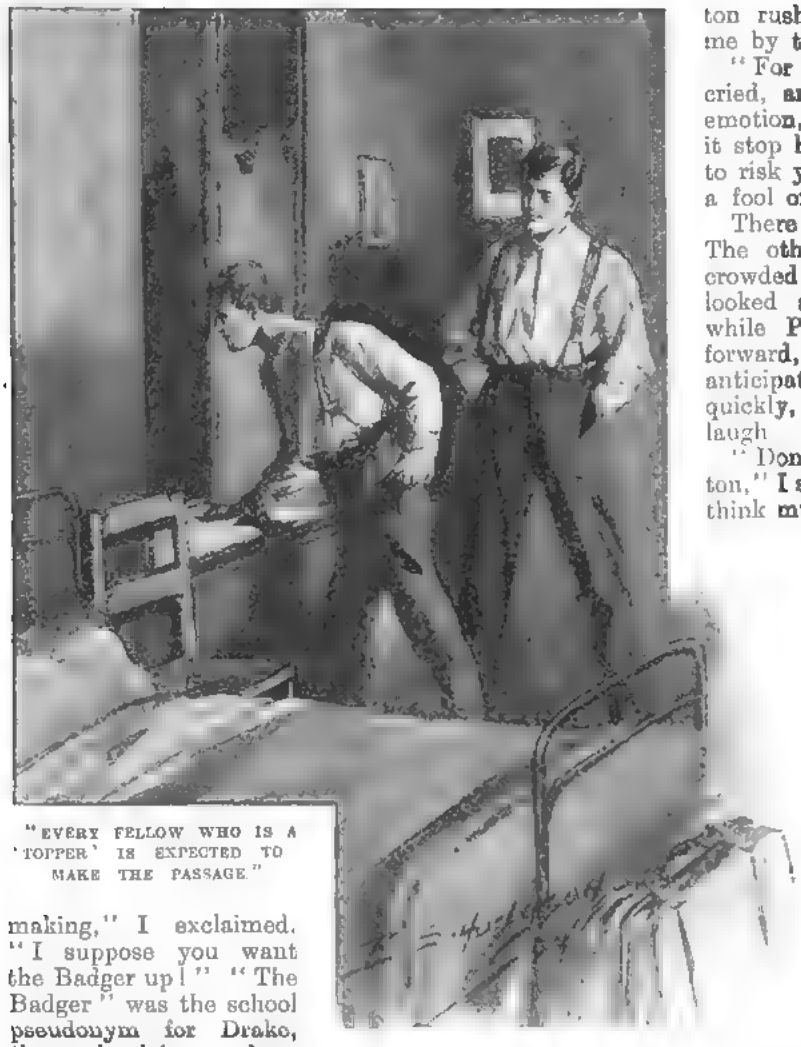
Copley was greatly disconcerted by the adroit way in which the tables had been turned, but, hiding his feelings, he replied,

"I'm not going to the swot of teaching a kid like that. Besides, it's not my turn. Let me see. Whose is it?" he continued, pretending to think. "I know," he cried, "it's either your turn or Spedding's—because Richards was last; I remember now!"

Stapleton looked from one to the other with perplexity and some alarm in his expression. "Do you really mean to say," he asked Penruddock, "that anyone has been mad enough to risk his life by—doing *that*?" He pointed out of the window with an irrepressible shudder as he spoke.

I now thought it was time *I* appeared on the scene.

"What a beastly jaw you fellows are



"EVERY FELLOW WHO IS A 'TOPPER' IS EXPECTED TO MAKE THE PASSAGE."

making," I exclaimed. "I suppose you want the Badger up!" "The Badger" was the school pseudonym for Drake, the chaplain, whose rooms were immediately below.

Copley at once appealed to me.

"True? Of course it's true!" I said. "As it's my turn, I will give you a demonstration, 'free, gratis, and for nothing.' We are not all muffs in the Top, Stapleton."

The colour flushed into his cheeks at the contemptuous words, but he set his mouth and said nothing.

I returned to my cubicle and put on a pair of running shoes. Then, in an easy, nonchalant way, as though it were an everyday occurrence, and not worth exciting one's self about one way or the other, I stepped on to the sill and prepared to get out. With an impulsive gesture, which he seemed unable to restrain, Stapleton rushed forward and caught me by the arm.

"For Heaven's sake," he cried, and his voice shook with emotion, "if this is a joke—let it stop here! I don't want you to risk your life merely to make a fool of me!"

There was a dead silence. The other boys, who had now crowded round, grinned and looked askance at each other, while Penruddock took a step forward, as if to speak; but I anticipated him, and struck in quickly, with a contemptuous laugh

"Don't be hysterical, Stapleton," I said, coldly. "We don't think much of that sort of fellow here—besides, it's bad form."

He drew back, and winced as if I had cut him with a whip, but offered no further protest to my venture. The next moment I was out of the window, and the perilous journey had begun. Strung up as I was, I thought little of the danger, till, happening to look down, I immediately felt my head swim; but I was far too experienced a climber to commit the same folly again; and a few seconds more brought me safely to the other window, where the fellows crowded round with loud congratulations.

Stapleton said nothing, but had to stand a storm of chaff and more or less contemptuous banter. My object, however, being achieved, I said no more, but went back to my cubicle, where Pen joined me. He said nothing, but I knew from the expression of his face he was not pleased. However, I took no notice of this, and commenced talking on indifferent topics, but he was not to be put off.

"Sped, old boy!" he said, "I wish you weren't so down upon young Stapleton. He's a clever little beggar, and a good-hearted one, too; he showed it just now, I think; and he's not, I'm sure, a bad plucked

'un at bottom. I tell you I felt a regular beast for taking advantage of him in the way we did. Drop rotting him now, at all events, or leave it to such born idiots as Copley, Hedley, and Co., who haven't the sense to see anything beyond their stupid noses, though Stapleton, I fancy, has sense enough to despise *them*."

"Oh, that's all right! I've done with him now," I said with assumed indifference. "But I can't stand prigs, Pen, or slack-backed chaps, at any price."

Penruddock was about to reply when the door burst open, and Hedley and Copley dashed into the room. Before either of us could wreak summary vengeance upon their persons for such an unwarrantable intrusion on our privacy, they gasped out:

"He's out there on the Styx!—funked and got stuck in the middle, and can't move one way or the other! . . . Go to him! . . . What shall we do? It's awful!"

"Who is?" I gasped, with a sinking heart.

"Stapleton. He went out because we rotted him—we never thought he would. He'll fall and be killed. For Heaven's sake, go!" Copley wrung his hands, while Hedley was nearly blubbing.

In a second Penruddock was at the window, with one foot on the sill. He looked out, and when he faced us again we saw he was deathly white, yet he spoke quite calmly and collectedly to the boys.

"Fetch Macdonald!" he said, peremptorily; "go—at once!—just as you are! Then to me: "Sped, go to the other window, and I'll get out of this. With one of us on either side we may get him across yet. God forgive us both!"

In a moment I took his meaning, and in less time than it takes to write it I had scattered the frightened boys at the other window, and commenced a journey which might very well end in the loss of three lives. Now for the first time I saw Stapleton. He was just about mid-way between the windows, standing perfectly still, as quiet as a statue, as rigid as marble. I spoke to him, but he made no reply, seeming utterly unconscious of our presence.

"Well done, young 'un!" I cried. "You are a brick! Hold on! I will bring you across in a jiff. Keep your end up!"

Was it my voice that was speaking? It sounded so shaky, queer, and unnatural; it might have belonged to some one else speaking ever so far away.

Penruddock also spoke.

"Don't lose your nerve, Stapleton!" he cried. "Hold tight, and we'll get you across all right."

But still there was no response.

It took us, I suppose, about fifteen seconds to reach Stapleton's side. But, once there, the awful danger that beset us and the utter helplessness of our charge for a moment overwhelmed us both. One glance at that ghastly face, with its twitching muscles, and unseeing, set stare of the eyes—one look at the rigidity of the whole figure, and the tenacious clutch of the thin white fingers on the ledge—showed us in a moment that any hope of co-operation, or even instinctive obedience to our commands, was utterly futile. To all intents and purposes Stapleton was paralysed by the awful peril in which he stood; and absolute unconsciousness, even to our unpractised eyes, we could see, was merely a matter of time. Only one thing was left—to die with him. With the extraordinary rapidity with which the mind works at such supreme moments, my brain took in the terrible aftermath of suffering, self-reproach, disgrace, shame and ignominy that must attach to me and mine through life; while at the same time my mind quite calmly reviewed our chances of rescue and the way in which it might be effected. I could see that the chances were very slight. Before they could get on the roof and descend to our aid by a rope, all would be over. It would mean ten minutes at least—or three times the limit of our chance of life. There was no window above us, only the eaves of the roof. There was no ladder nearer than the top of the field—five minutes' distance, at least!

If ever a fervent prayer for aid was breathed to the Creator, it came then from my lips and heart.

We were now at Stapleton's side; without a word we instinctively did the only thing which gave us any hope of even prolonging the agony. Standing with my right leg outside that of Stapleton's nearest to me, I placed my left leg over the back of his right, with my toe in the ledge between his two feet. By these means I supported his weight somewhat, and pinned him partially to the wall. Then, stretching out my left arm, I entwined it with Penruddock's right, beneath Stapleton's shoulders. This meant that the safety of all three depended on our two hands, which practically supported the whole strain, for the cataleptic trance on

OUR WHOLE SAFETY DEPENDED UPON OUR TWO HANDS

which Stapleton's own hold depended might end at any moment.

By the mercy of Providence, it chanced that at this particular spot where I stood a piece of the top ledge had somehow been chipped away when the stone was seated in the brickwork, and in this groove my three first fingers settled with a fairly solid half-inch grip. Pen was not so fortunate, only having the natural slant and roughness of the stone to sustain the double weight he was supporting.

We stood thus for a few seconds without a word, the thumping of our hearts alone being distinctly audible. Suddenly there was a stir, the sound of confused voices, the rush of many feet, and we knew that the alarm had spread like wildfire, and that the whole "house" was up.

Meanwhile the rigidity of Stapleton's slight frame became relaxed, and a new and

alarming phase of the terrific nervous tension he was enduring became ominously apparent. Reader, have you ever, when walking in the country, struck with your stick the wires which run through the uprights of some iron fence, and watched the sympathetic vibrations quiver along its course and gradually die away? In much the same fashion we could feel the body of the boy we held vibrate in convulsive tremors in our hold. Then we understood, with a thrill of sickening despair, that he was gradually becoming insensible, and that such poor relief as his own spasmodic hold afforded us was near its end; and with this came the bitter knowledge that our own ability to sustain his weight had nearly reached its limits.

At this critical juncture I heard Penruddock's voice, hoarse and strained, but, nevertheless, free from any trace of the craven fear I myself was experiencing. He didn't seem to realise that a ghastly and imminent death could now only be a question of moments.

"Spedding," he said, slowly and distinctly, "my fingers are slipping. Do you think you could hold him yourself for a sec., while I get a fresh grip?"

"Must you?" I cried, in a weak passion of terror.

"I *must*," he replied, insistently; "I shall be over myself if I don't. Keep a straight bat, old chap!"

"Well, do it *now*," I said, hoarsely—"*now*—at once. I'm nearly played out!"

I felt his arm withdrawn. At this critical moment, without further warning, Stapleton abruptly collapsed, the suddenness of the strain nearly forcing my left foot off the ledge. As it was, he almost slipped from under my arm, while a great cry leaped upwards from below, gradually dying away into the silence of a great suspense. Heavens! the agony of that one crowded moment! Even now it brings the sweat to my brow as I write the words. Instinctively I crammed my leg against his, and threw my left arm round his waist, and by sheer strength of muscle held him up, while I bent down and caught the collar of his coat between my teeth. Meanwhile I drove my cramped fingers with frantic energy deep down into the friendly crevice of the ledge. The next moment with a feeling of unutterable relief I felt Pen's arm seek mine, and with its grip an appreciable lessening of the strain.

Then—clear, sharp, and distinct—came a voice from the depths beneath. Were ever the accents of a voice more welcome to human ears, or words more full of divine hope? . . . .

It was Macdonald who spoke.

"Penruddock and Spedding — listen! Hang on, like the trumps you are, till you hear me say 'Go!' Then release your hold of Stapleton and let him fall. Do you hear? It's your only chance. Only ten seconds longer, old chaps. Do you hear me?"

I did, but couldn't speak. Pen, however, replied in hoarse, unnatural tones: "All right—savvy, savvy! But we're done."

Did ever ten seconds pass with such leaden feet? Stapleton was now quite unconscious, and as he swung round and outwards nearly his whole weight fell on me. I felt I was losing consciousness myself, but all the time I was following in a drowsy way the half-muttered directions, followed by the shuffling of feet, below. Then came a tense silence, and—at length—the word "Go!"

Our encircling arms and legs, and my stiffened jaws, slowly released their hold, and—oh! the horror of it! —Stapleton toppled slowly backwards, seemed to be suspended for a second in the air, and then vanished like lightning into space. Presently a dull thud, and then a great swinging cheer —such a cheer as only English boys can give, followed by a confused babel of voices —then silence once more, and Macdonald is speaking again:

"Spedding and Penruddock, if either of you can't manage to get back the way you came, you can jump with perfect safety, and we will catch you in this carpet. Anyway, we will follow your steps, so that if you do fall you won't be hurt. Now, you fellows, three cheers, to give them a good send-off, and let them be loud ones, for the heroes of the Top."

Again wild cheers rang out, and then in the silence some one struck up, in a quavering voice, "For he's a jolly good fellow!" and the next moment the whole school was singing the words as if its life depended on it—with the Head leading them! And I—I was blubbing like a girl.

* * * * *

Well, how we got back we never knew. I don't remember much about it, but somehow we managed it; and when Pen made

STAPLETON VANISHED INTO SPACE.

the window, eager hands seized any part of him that could be held or handled, and he was whisked like magic out of sight and danger. Similar attentions fell to my share, but the moment I got into the room and saw old Pen sitting on my bed with his head in his hands, and the fellows beating and thumping his shoulders as if he were the Head's sturdy Persian carpet, to which we owed our safety, everything vanished into a blue sort of mist, and when I came to the room was empty, except for Dr. Colbourne and the Head, who took my hand and said such generous and undeserved things that I had to burst out with the whole story and make a clean breast of it. And all the Head said was:

"The atonement was greater than the fault."

And somehow, ever afterwards, I felt that the Head stood in quite a different light from that in which I had hitherto regarded him.

When I recovered from the shock—which I did after a couple of days or so—Stapleton had left the school, never to return. The terrible strain he had undergone had utterly unhinged his nervous system, and the doctors had ordered complete change, and entire cessation from mental work of any kind. It was then I heard first how our almost miraculous escape had been suddenly contrived. When Copley, with Hedley in close attendance, burst into the prefects' common-room, its occupants had all rushed out without the faintest idea what to do. But Macdonald, cool and clear-headed, kept his presence of mind, and a glimpse of the Head's study carpet lying in the hall—where it had been put by the men after its monthly beating and brushing—had suggested in a moment the only possible way by which our rescue could be promptly and safely effected. The rest the reader knows.

As regards the offence itself, everyone made a clean breast of his share of it, and the Head read us all such a lecture that we felt that a birching and expulsion, at least, would be but a light sentence for our crime. So our relief may be imagined when he wound up by saying that, yielding to the earnest entreaties of

Colonel Stapleton that the matter should be condoned, and having in view the fact that everyone concerned had frankly confessed, and that two at least of the chief offenders had themselves risked their lives in expiation of their folly, he had come to the conclusion that perhaps he would not be acting with undue leniency in saying no more about it. He added, drily, however, that the next boy who essayed the perilous passage would find no carpet awaiting him below. So that was the end of the Styx.

Only one other thing connected with this matter I have to record, and that is, that at the big function when the prizes were given away at the end of the term, and all the boys' paters and maters were present, the Head, to Penruddock's surprise and my own, called our names out just before the singing of "Dulce Domum"; and when we went up together, looking very shamefaced, no doubt, to our intense embarrassment and surprise he told the people the story I've tried to tell you; and then, to our amazement and delight, presented us with two ripping gold watches from Colonel Stapleton, with our names engraved in the cases, together with this inscription: "For an act of great bravery."

Boys, the story is told, but if you want to see three schoolfellows who are staunch chums and comrades in after life, I doubt if you could find three closer friends than Penruddock, Stapleton, and myself.

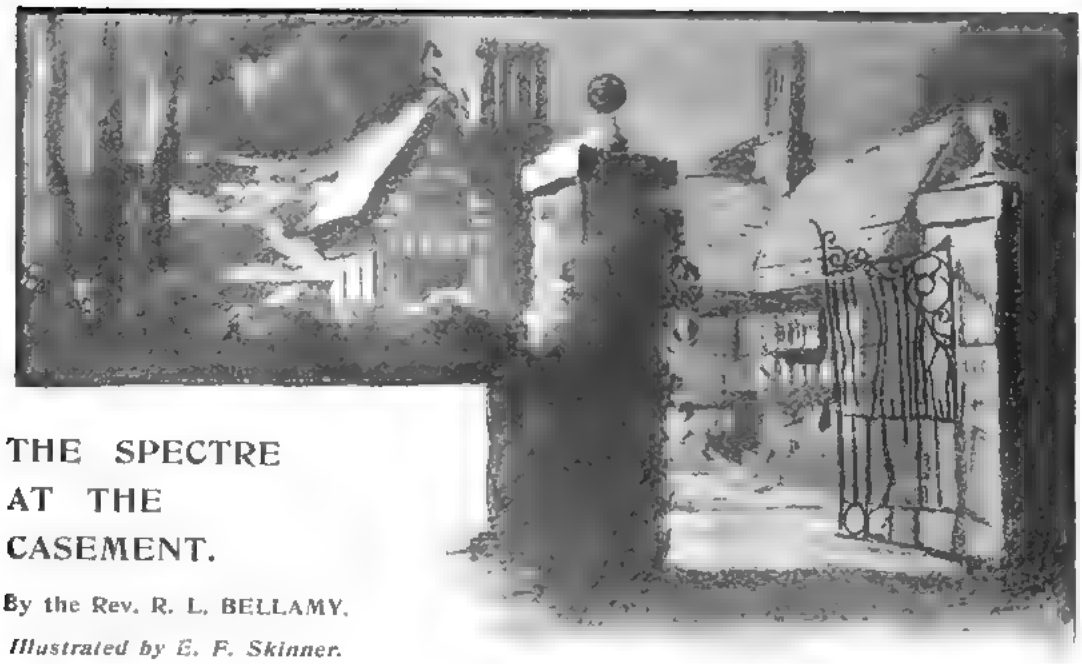
A WORD WITH A STORY.

SOME words have indeed curious stories in connection with their etymology. The study of this science reveals many interesting stories. A good example is the word "sincere." Any good dictionary will tell that the derivation of this word is from the Latin "sine," meaning "without," and "cera," meaning "wax." But how can anyone imagine sincere to be connected with wax? About this point, however, there is an interesting story to tell.

A sculptor was engaged in the work of forming a bust of a famous man. He intended to send it to the Academy or to some such institution. He laboured diligently at his work for some years. One day, as his task was nearing completion, he knocked off a chip from the nose of his figure by an accidental stroke. He was now in the greatest anxiety. Was all his painstaking work to go for nothing? Was the labour of years to be unrewarded? In the midst of his distress a bright idea occurred to him. He got a piece of wax, and, sticking it on to the point of the bust's nose, he skilfully moulded it into the required shape. So cleverly did he do this that only an extremely close observer could have discovered the defect. When he sent up his work, however, he was not prepared for the minute examination to which it was subjected. The fraud was discovered, and ever afterwards the critics took care to ascertain whether all figures were "sine cera," or, in other words, "free from adulteration."

Soon afterwards the term was used in connection with human beings, and to-day "sincere" is one of our most frequently applied adjectives.

"CLAUDIUS."



THE SPECTRE AT THE CASEMENT.

By the Rev. R. L. BELLAMY.

Illustrated by E. F. Skinner.

"WELL," said Drummond, thoughtfully, "I'm not quite sure that it's advisable to tell you about that adventure. You see, it was one of those affairs where the glory doesn't go where it's properly due. But if Dixon and Carlton'll undertake to do my next impot between them, perhaps I might be prevailed upon. Is it a bargain, you two?"

"All right! go ahead!" bravely spake out those two worthies, devoutly hoping that Drummond might walk with sufficient circumspection to avoid any more impots until such time as the unholy compact should have faded from his memory.

Whereon Drummond proceeded.

"We were doing a bit of a walking tour on a small scale up in Yorkshire, and had got through some awfully jolly country, when one evening we landed on a tempting-looking place just about supper-time. It was mentioned in the guide-book, and looked just what it was, namely, a very old place which had once been the Manor House, and had been much reduced in size during the last hundred years or so. But the best part of it was, the guide-book said there was a ghost belonging to it, and gave the story of how, in sixteen hundred and something, a new baby, who was heir to the whole show, had been chucked out of a window into the courtyard by the chap who had previously been the heir, and thought he would like to remain so.

"The thing had always been a mystery until after the death of the murderer, and then a confession written by him was found which gave the facts.

"And after that, from time to time, the ghost of the murderer had been seen at the window on moonlight nights with a child in its arms. When it did appear, it would keep showing itself at the window, and then going back into the room, and seemed to be wanting to throw the kid out, but somehow unable to do so.

"Interesting sort of tale, and we read it over two or three times during supper, and wondered which was the room from the window of which it had happened, for the book said that, though it was unknown which room it actually was, it had certainly been preserved, since all the rooms overlooking the courtyard were as they had been for the last two or three centuries.

"We took our candles about ten o'clock and went upstairs, and were rather amused to find that both our rooms looked out upon the courtyard, so that either of them might be *the* one, and naturally we had a little joking about it.

"The room in which I found myself wasn't one to strike you as particularly cheerful. The big old four-poster was all right, though it reminded you rather of the kind of thing you see in historic castles and show places—'This is the bed King Charles I. died in,' or 'In this bed the

Black Prince was smothered in the Tower in the year something or other,' and so on. It was rather a remarkable bed, as it had a good high foot-board, which, I think, is unusual with four-posters, and certainly gave it a very box-you-up sort of look. However, it seemed comfortable enough, which was the main thing. But what *was* a bit off was the way the walls had been 'decorated!' It had evidently been done by somebody who was either a grim humorist or else absolutely without the slightest scrap of humour. Every blessed picture had something or other to do with death. There was a doctor feeling a ghastly-looking patient's pulse, and the picture was called 'No Hope!' There was another of two funerals, one very grand going from a mansion, and the other very humble from a cottage, and it was 'The Common Lot.' Then there was 'The Deathbed of Voltaire,' 'The Coach Accident,' two shipwrecks, and a very, very ancient rustic in a churchyard, leaning upon a stick, and staring with the most awful hollow eyes at the tombstones. There was no name under this. And then, as if the pictures might be apt to prove too exhilarating, there were about ten black frames containing funeral cards, some of them embellished with the most curious poetry you ever saw.

"I called Millington in to have a look at my cheerful walls, and the whole set-out tickled his fancy immensely—in fact, so much so, that I half wished I hadn't called him.

"'By Jove, Drum, old man!' he said, 'it's easy to see where you've got to. This is evidently the dying chamber of the establishment, and I should think when they put anybody in here it's about as decided a hint to go as the Irishman received when he got kicked out.'

"'What a beastly idea!' I said, and then, as he went on a lot more in the same way, I began rather to lose my wool, and threatened to swop rooms with him if he didn't chuck it. That's the worst of old Mill—when he starts rotting, he never knows when to leave off.

"'Oh, of course, I wouldn't say a word to suggest any unpleasant ideas for anything,' he said, 'especially on a night like this, when the wind's moaning round like a restless spirit, and there's just enough moonlight to make everything look a trifle uncanny. I hope you're not nervous, because I shouldn't at all wonder if you were to see something to-night. Mind you notice it carefully, if you do, so as to be able to tell us all about it properly afterwards; if there's one thing I feel keen about it is to meet with some one who really has seen a genuine ghost at first hand.'

"'Oh! clear out, and go and be funny in your own room,' I growled.

"'All right. By the way, I suppose you've looked under the bed and in those two rather suspicious-looking cupboards?'

"'Good-night!'

"'Good-night,' said Millington, as he stood for a moment at the door, gazing very thoughtfully at my historic-looking bed. 'H'm, now, I wonder—ah, well, never mind. Good-night.'

"'You wonder what?' I asked.

"'Well,' replied the wretch, with a fine pretence at reluctance, 'I *was* going to say I wonder how many good (and otherwise) folk have been laid out on that imposing couch.'

"'Oh, hang it! clear out, I tell you, with your ghoulish notions. I jolly well hope you'll get a nice hair-raising scare yourself to-night; it would do you good, and serve you jolly well right.'

"'Oh, don't!' cried the luny, 'pray don't wish anything so awful. I assure you, Drummond, I should be horribly frightened if anything of the sort happened to-night. It isn't often that I should care twopence for that kind of thing, but, whether it's the place and surroundings, or possibly some occult influence actually at work—but, of course, that's absurd—yet, well, I don't know how to describe to you what I feel to-night—somehow as if something very strange *might* happen—not in the least as one feels in a general sort of way, you know Now, can you account for a matter-of-fact chap like me feeling in that way?'

"I really hardly knew whether the fellow was rotting or not, he sounded so jolly real; but I guessed he was, so I snarled out, 'I can account for the way you will feel directly, for if you don't make yourself scarce, I'll bung the soap at you!'

"'Well, you are an unsympathetic beggar! So, I suppose I must go and lie awake in a cold sweat all night alone, while you snore away here just as if you were in the most matter-of-fact room and bed imaginable. It passes my understanding how you can. Ugh! I wouldn't pass to-night here myself for anything. Good-night, and I *hope* you'll be all right.'

"'Clear out!' I roared, getting really mad, and he slipped through the doorway; but in half-a-minute he opened it an inch or two again and said: 'I say, remember, if you *should* see anything, don't go and give a great, vulgar screech, as if you were scared, but just take your opportunity thankfully and make the most of it, so as to be able to report to me afterwards. Good-night again Hope you'll sleep well.'

"I said nothing, but went and slammed the door to, and then began to turn in.

"Somehow, I didn't feel as sleepy as usual that night. I wasn't frightened, of course, but old M.'s gruesome ideas rather stuck in one's mind, and I began to picture to myself all sorts of weird scenes that might have taken place in that room, and to wonder whether there might not have been a few murders and suicides thrown in. Besides, you may bet I felt pretty certain old M. meant to be up to tricks, and had just been trying to prepare my mind for them a little, so there I lay wide awake, engaged in the cheerful occupation of listening to the church clock striking the hours; or, if I did drop off for a few minutes every now and then, I had such rotten dreams about being buried alive and what-not, that it was worse than lying awake; and six or seven times I woke up with the impression that I was dead, and when I found I wasn't I still thought I *had* been, and began feeling the sheets to make sure they were just ordinary bedclothes. Altogether, it was about the most restless night I ever spent, and I fairly longed for the day.

"At last I fell into a doze a little bit more solid than most of them had been, but I woke from it quite suddenly with a sort of feeling that there was something in the room. I didn't open my eyes for a few seconds, and when I did venture to do so the room was lighter than before I went to sleep, because the moon had risen, and, sure enough, there was a tall, white figure standing perfectly motionless at the foot of the bed.

"I don't mind saying I felt a wee bit creepy, but I didn't yell, though I can't say I felt much like carrying out Millington's advice and going in for a sort of illustrated interview with my visitor.

"It was a very strange-looking figure with, so far as I could see, the head as well as the body wrapped in white stuff. Not wishing to hurry things on too fast, I closed my eyes again for a moment. It was only for a moment, but when I opened them the figure was gone. Having been in that sort of mixed-up, half-and-half state between waking and sleeping so much that night, I thought I must have been dreaming about the figure, and, as I felt rather fagged, I decided to doze off again. But, before letting myself finally drop off, I thought I would take one more look to make my mind quite easy, so I lazily opened a bit of one eye again, and lo! there was the figure standing by the window, looking down at something it was holding in its arms. I was wide awake enough now, and I couldn't help giving a little gasp, but the ghost didn't seem to hear, and after standing at the window for a short time it turned round and came slowly back to the foot of the bed, with the object still in its arms. I couldn't see clearly what the object was, but, from the way it was carried, I judged it to be a baby —or the ghost of one. By the time the figure stood at the bedfoot again, I can tell you I was feeling really queer. It stood there for a moment, looking earnestly at me, so far as I could make out, for, of course, there was no light on its face. I couldn't stand this any longer, so I said, 'Who's that?' and my voice, which it was rather hard to get going at all, sounded rummier than I've ever heard it. The figure took no notice; it remained standing there for a few seconds longer, and then bobbed down behind the bedfoot.

"Then, of course, my nervous fit took its departure pretty quickly.

"'Oho! Mr. Millington,' I said to myself, 'so that's how the ghostly disappearance was managed, is it?' And then, just as I was on the point of calling out to let him know that he'd had all his precious trouble of getting up and fooling around for nothing, and that I hadn't been frightened in the least, I checked myself and began to wonder whether I couldn't pay him out a little for his monkey tricks. So I lay still with my eyes shut for a minute, during which I thought I heard some very faint sounds of rustling cloth that I couldn't quite make out.

"I wasn't able, on the spur of the moment, to think of any very original way of punishing the ghost—in fact, the only thing I *could* think of was buzzing something at it as soon as it came up again.

"Unfortunately, I'd put my boots outside the door, and hadn't got so much as a slipper handy. There was simply nothing

I LET FLY WITH ALL MY MIGHT AT ITS HEAD.

to serve as a boomerang but a pillow, which was a lot too soft for the purpose. However, as that was the only thing available, I determined to make up for the softness of the weapon by the vigour of the throw, so I gently slid my hand up and grabbed it by the corner. Then I opened my eyes for action. For a moment I was half-startled again, for there was the figure standing in just the same attitude by the window! 'All right, my beauty,' I thought, 'you shall have something to remember this night's lark by!' and with that I sat up suddenly and let fly with all my might at its head.

"Certainly I couldn't complain that my little effort fell flat.

"The ghost had its back turned to me, and when it received the pillow with a good hearty thud on the back of the head and shoulders, it gave a big lurch forward, shoved one hand, holding the child, through the window, and then set up a terrified yell in a voice which I was sure could not possibly be Millington's, no matter how much he might be trying to disguise it. Besides, a chap caught as neatly as that wouldn't be likely to think much about disguising his voice just then.

"Here was a nice kettle of fish! Who

"WHO ARE YOU A-MURDERIN' OF, YOUNG MAN?"

on earth could it be? and what on earth could he be up to? I didn't know whether to rate at him, or jeer, or jump out and collar him, or go to his assistance, or what, and while I was wondering what my next move had better be, in bounced the stout landlady, clad in a wonderful dressing-gown.

"'Hey-dey! Bless my heart and soul, what's the matter now?' she started, and then, as she saw the ghost still near the window, wringing its hands, and too scared even to make for the door, and moaning, 'Hey! hey! hey! O Lor'! O Lor'!' she turned on me like a good old virago.

"'Who are you a-murderin' of, young man?' she bawled. 'My word, if I'd

aknown you'd bin a wicked assassinatin' party like you are, would I 'a' took yer in in a respectable house where there's never bin not so much as a murder never since I took hold of the management, to my certain knowledge? Hout yer go to-morrow mornin', as sure as my name's Rebecca Nuttall, you and your blessed friend and all. Eh, to think o' murderin' a poor old man in his own house on a Sabbath morn, and him engaged in the sacred occupation of gettin' his Sabbath clothes out of the box, neither more nor less! Be ashamed o' yerself, do, and the sooner you're out o' this the better. Come along, Jeremiah, an' don't stand blatherin' there like a bairn.'

"By this time the whole house seemed to have been roused, for there was quite a shuffling of feet outside the door, and the real Millington, in a half-dressed state, came in.

"'Hullo!' said he, 'what the dickens is up?'

"As soon as Mrs. Rebecca Nuttall caught sight of my 'blessed friend,' she went for him almost as vigorously as she had gone for me; but, as you know, old Millington's got a cool sort of way with him at most times, and can be pretty soothing when he likes, and in about two minutes he'd got Rebecca and the ghost both steered out of the room, and the people away from just outside the door, and I was left to my meditations.

"These were not altogether pleasant, as you may fancy, but they didn't last very long, for in a little time Millington landed back and lighted my candle. Then he sat on the side of my bed and roared till I thought he would laugh away every atom of breath he had.

"'What's there to laugh at, you silly goat?' I said. 'If it hadn't been for your idiotic humbug last night it wouldn't have happened. Anyhow, you'll get a little punishment, for you've got to clear out the first thing in the morning, without any breakfast, and it's Sunday, and no shops open, even if there were any shops within a hundred miles to be open; so now you just see what you've brought on yourself.'

"The idiot laughed worse than ever.

"'Me brought it on!' he spluttered; 'I like that! Oh, Drummond, you are a funny animal! Oh, you'll be the death of me, Drummond! You *are* a champion ghost-layer! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!'

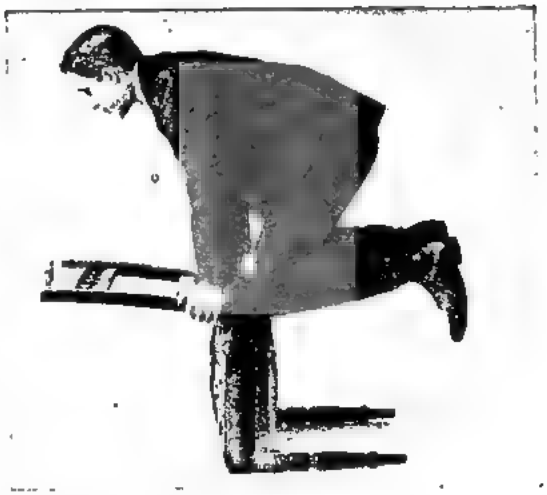
"At last he pulled himself together enough to be able to talk some sort of sense, and then I began to pick out the facts of the mystery.

"It seems that when the ghost first appeared it was not an appropriate time of night for such things, but about six o'clock in the morning. The moon, Millington explained, was an old one, and so was visible very late. I'm not quite clear as to what he meant, but I know it looked uncommonly like the middle of the night to me. Well, Rebecca had sent her husband to get his Sunday clothes out of the box in my room where they were kept, and had told him to be sure not to wake me; so he daren't bring a light, but kept fumbling about and carrying first one thing to the window and then another, to see if he'd got the right ones, and, of course, the daft old imbecile must carry them exactly as you'd carry a babby. Being as deaf as a post he hadn't taken any notice of what I said, which added a good deal to the ghostliness of the whole biz.

"'And what about breakfast?' I said, rather savagely, 'and what about some place for us to go and spend the day in, seeing we're going to get chucked out of here as soon as we're up?'

"'That's all right,' said Millington, 'I explained to the old lady that you always had been particularly nervous about ghosts, and should be excused for any little indiscretion you might have committed in the frenzy of your terror, and I managed to make her see it in that light, and, in fact, her present frame of mind is one of tender compassion for your frailties—'Poor young man!' as she says. So we're going to be allowed to stay on, on condition, of course, that you try to keep your nerves under a little more control, and instead of having no breakfast we're going to have an extra good one—to make up for the scare you've had! Well, I guess it's not much use trying to get any more sleep this morning, so I'll go and finish dressing, and you may as well get up.'

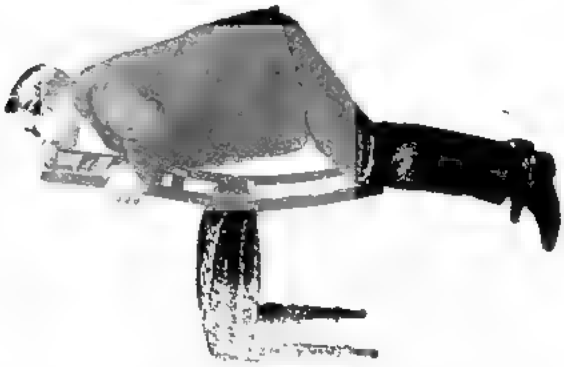
"And off he went. Of course, I was jolly glad about breakfast and staying on, but I felt rather riled with Millington. You see, it isn't extra pleasant seeing everybody watching you with a kind of smothered grin on them, especially when you feel that you really deserve more admiration than anything else. But old Mill. always had an aggravating knack of coming out on top in all his little larks—hang him!"

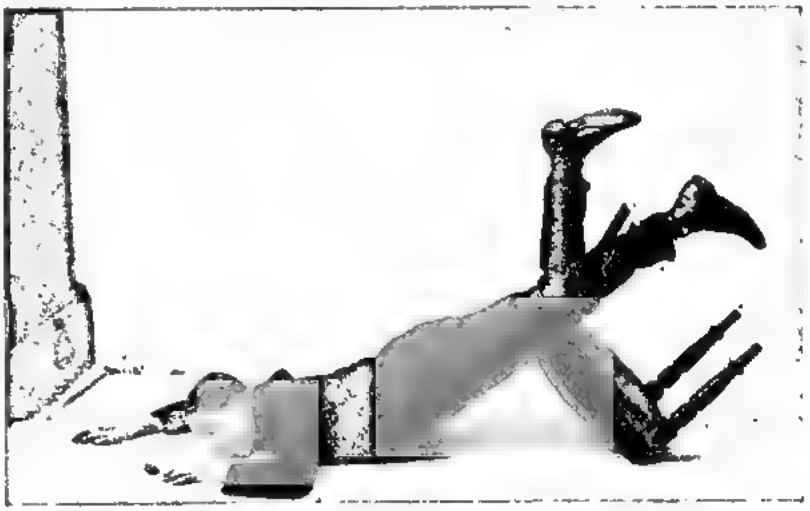


CHAIR AND CORK TRICK.

THIS is a balancing feat that requires a strong nerve and a strong chair. If you do not own the chair you practise on, see that you obtain permission from its owner before you use it.

The object of the trick, as may be seen by the accompanying illustrations, is to lift with the mouth a cork that has been placed upon the top rail of the chair back. Care must be taken in performing this feat, that the whole weight of the body is carried by the chair legs. Otherwise, if the centre of gravity is moved but the fraction of an inch beyond the seat, there will be the chance of a mishap, as illustrated in the last picture.





CHRISTMAS HYMNS.

By A. B. Cooper.

THE LATE DEAN FARRAR.
He was once an Assistant Master at Harrow, and there wrote "In the fields with the flocks abiding."
Photo. Russell and Sons.

THERE is a quality about a Christmas hymn which does not seem to belong to any other, however fine the poetry may be, or however melodious the tune to which it is sung. What is it? Probably it is association. In the minds of young people the Christmas hymn is closely connected with Waits, with Christmas bells, and with frost and snow—at least, in imagination, or on a Christmas card, if not in reality—while to older folk the strains of a carol bring back the sad, sweet memories of "the days that are no more," and the joys of well-remembered childhood.

I suppose of all Christmas hymns sung as carols in the small hours of Christmas morning, there is none so popular as "While shepherds watched their flocks by night." The marvellously beautiful Bible story associated for all time with the Judæan hills, the "cold light of stars," the "watchful shepherds," and the breathing stillness of midnight, has inspired many hymns beside this one, such as the greatest of Christmas anthems, "Hark! the herald angels sing"; but there is an old-world flavour about "While shepherds watched their flocks" which appeals to the true sense of this holy time. We see again the bright seraph illumining the night with his radiance; we see again the cowering shepherds, afraid of the wondrous vision, and we hear once more the angelic message of "peace and goodwill to men."

This beautiful hymn is more than a hundred and fifty years old, and was written by Nahum Tate, who became Poet Laureate in 1690. Along with Dr. Nicholas Brady, he wrote a volume of metrical psalms, many of which are sung to-day, especially in Scotland.

Charles Wesley wrote "Hark! the herald angels sing," one of the most inspiring sacred lyrics in the English language. I wonder if there is a church in Christendom, from the venerable Abbey of Westminster to the humblest house of prayer in the tiniest village, where this joyous hymn will not be sung on Christmas morning. Such world-wide use points not only to the popularity, but also to the majesty and beauty of the great hymn, for, depend upon it, only that which is truly great and intrinsically beautiful attains to universal recognition.

Charles Wesley wrote an enormous number of hymns—some 6,000 in all—but quantity does not always, nor generally, mean quality, and though some of Wesley's hymns, such as the one we are talking about, and "Jesu, lover of my soul," are known, not only here, but also to the blacks in the wilds of Africa, and to the converted natives of China and India, yet others have never even been printed, existing only in

CHARLES WESLEY.
Author of "Hark! the herald angels sing"

manuscript. Still, if to have written one great hymn be a passport to the gratitude of mankind, what ought our gratitude to be to Charles Wesley, who wrote so many which are sung by the universal church?

"In the fields with the flocks abiding" is another hymn celebrating that wondrous night on the Judæan hills. But it is quite a new hymn compared with the other two. The late Dean Farrar wrote it when he was a young man, and an assistant master at Harrow. It is not every public school that is fortunate enough to possess a class master who is also a poet, as Farrar in this beautiful hymn proves himself to be. Mr. John Farmer, who was for many years music master at Harrow, and who set most of the famous Harrow songs, composed a beautiful tune to this hymn, and to his setting it is invariably sung.

Two very beautiful hymns which have come to us from America treat of the same incident. The first,

"It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,"

was written fifty-five years ago by the Rev.

REV. JOHN WESLEY AND HIS FRIENDS AT OXFORD.
The man with his two forefingers together seated at the table to the left is Charles Wesley. The man immediately on John Wesley's right is George Whitfield.
Engraved by Samuel Belton from the painting by Marshall Claxton.

Edmund H. Sears, and is now found in many well-known collections. One of its verses ought to be sung as a prayer this Christmas time, when the papers are full of news of how, in the words of Byron,

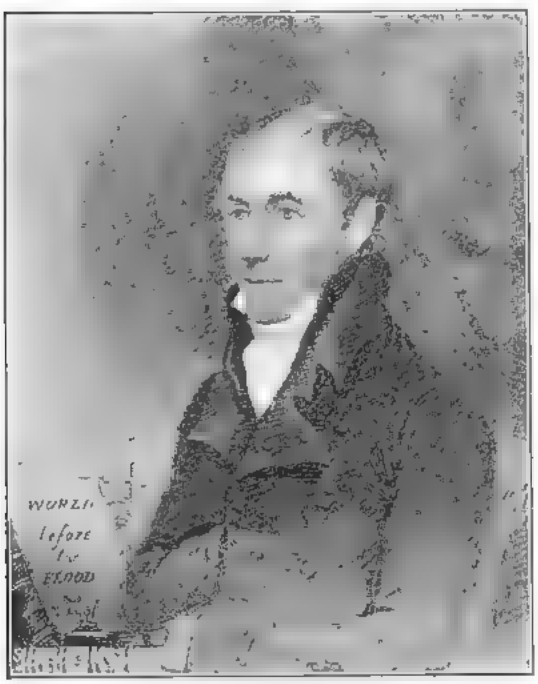
"The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse—friend, foe—in one red burial blent."

Does it not seem strange, although it is now nearly two thousand years since the angels' song was sung, that men are still killing one another with as much zest as ever? This beautiful hymn says:—

"But with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long,
Beneath the angel strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love song which they bring;
O hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing."

The other hymn is equally well-known, and was written by an American poetess, who also composed some of the most charming verses for children in the language. Who does not know:—

"I love to hear the story
Which angel voices tell,
How once the King of Glory
Came down on earth to dwell."



JAMES MONTGOMERY.
Author of "Angels from their realms of glory."

MRS. EMILY HUNTINGDON MILLER.
Author of "I love to hear the story."

My friend, Mr. Francis Arthur Jones, the author of that beautiful book, "Famous Hymns and their Authors," which would make a capital present for CAPTAIN readers young or old, received a letter from the authoress, Mrs. Emily Huntingdon Miller, in which she says:—

"I do not know that there are any circumstances of special interest connected with the writing of this children's hymn. I was at the time (1867) joint editor of a magazine for young people, entitled *The Little Corporal*, for which I usually furnished a poem to be set to music each month. I had had a very serious illness, and was slowly recovering, and, though too weak to do much literary work, the fact that the paper would be published without my usual contribution was something of a worry to me. I determined, if possible, that this should not happen, so one afternoon, when I felt a little stronger, I took pen and paper, and began to write 'I love to hear the story.' Though it is now close upon thirty-five years ago, I remember that the words were suggested rapidly and continuously, as if I were writing from dictation. In less than fifteen minutes the hymn was written and sent away without corrections. Its popularity has always surprised me, as among the hundreds of hymns and songs I have written, many seem to me to be of greater merit."

The last hymn which I shall mention, that has the subject of the shepherds'

DR. JOHN BYROM.
Author of "Christians, awake!"
Taken from a sketch by a friend.

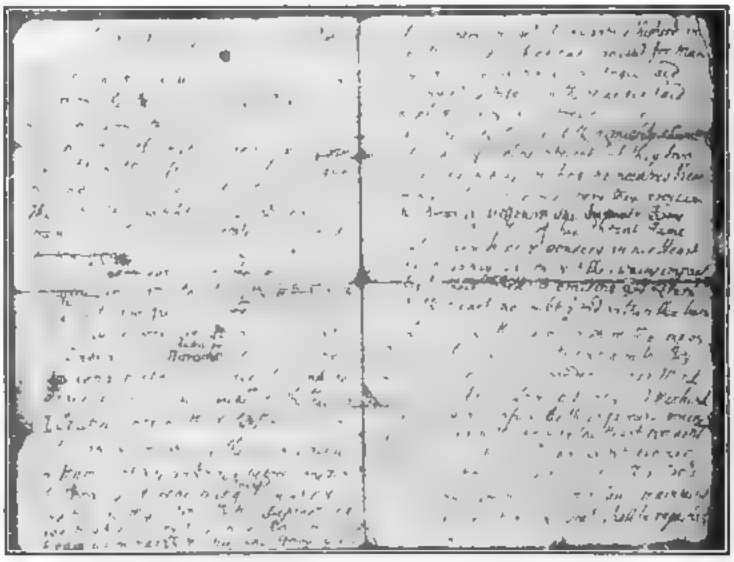
angel visitant for its main theme, is "Angels from their realms of glory," by James Montgomery. Like others who might be mentioned, Montgomery was a poet who, were he to return to earth again, would find his long and elaborate poems forgotten, and his simpler hymns well remembered. He lived all his life at Sheffield, where he owned and edited a paper called the *Iris*, and he wrote a large number of hymns, many of which are of great excellence.

The hymn known as "Christians, awake!" enjoys as close an association with Christmas as the holly-bush. It belongs to Christmas morning, and to that morning alone. It cannot rank in quality with "Hark! the herald angels sing," but it has, nevertheless, the true spirit of joyful devotion, which is the spirit of Christmas. This very popular hymn was written by John Byrom more than 150 years ago—in 1745, to be exact. Its author was educated at the King's School, Chester, and at Trinity College, Cambridge, of which he became a Fellow. In later years he also became a Fellow of the Royal Society, no slight honour in those days as in these.

Strangely enough, "Christians, awake," although not considered to be a children's hymn, was written for a child—none other than the author's little daughter, Dolly. Byrom had promised to write a Christmas hymn for his little girl, and, sure enough, the hymn, neatly sealed, was lying with other presents on the breakfast table when Dolly appeared. To this day the manuscript may be seen at Cheetham Hospital, Manchester. I wonder if any Captainites would care to have a hymn for a Christmas present! Well, it immortalised Dolly Byrom, at any rate, for it is hardly likely she would have been known to posterity but for this pretty episode.

The incident of the Magi, who were guided by the Star of Bethlehem, is one of the most picturesque in the Scriptures. According to tradition these were Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthazar, three Kings of the East. The first offered gold, the emblem of royalty, to the infant Jesus; the second frankincense, in token of divinity; the third myrrh, in prophetic allusion to the death which awaited the Man of Sorrows.

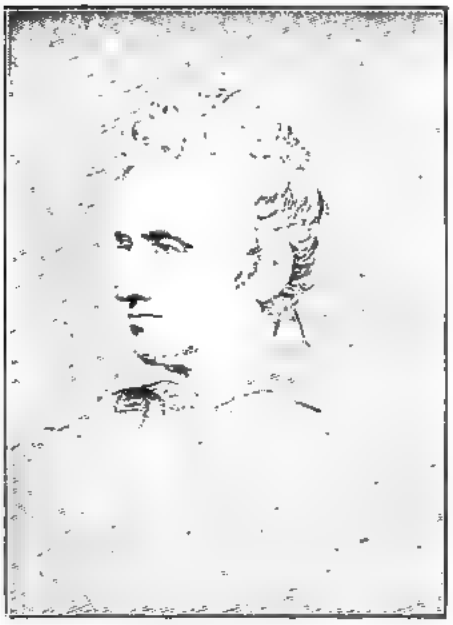
All the circumstances of their visit have formed the theme of countless hymns, but one of the choicest is Bishop Heber's,



Facsimile of "Christians, awake! salute the happy morn."

"Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thy aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid."

It contains a sublime Christmas lesson which we might all take to heart. There are some people who are generous at Christmas and never again all the year



BISHOP HEBER.
Author of "Brightest and best of the sons of the morning."

round. Theirs is not true generosity; it is only the result of custom. But true kindness comes from the heart, and is perennial, not intermittent. The poet beautifully says:—

"Vainly we offer each costly oblation,
Vainly with gifts would His favour secure;
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor."

Reginald Heber, unlike Wesley, Watts, and, indeed, most hymn-writers, wrote comparatively few hymns, but every one is a masterpiece. His great missionary hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains," was written in twenty minutes and never corrected. It is a splendid specimen of spontaneous composition. His "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty" is one of the finest religious odes in the language.

I have just mentioned Watts, and no hymn article would be complete without some reference to the greatest hymn-writer of this or any other land. Although he did not actually compose a Christmas hymn which has come into general use, yet he wrote one of the tenderest "Cradle Songs" imaginable. I cannot refrain from quoting some of its verses:—

"Soft and easy is thy cradle;
Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay:
When His birth-place was a stable,
And His softest bed was hay.

See the kindly shepherds round him,
Telling wonders from the sky!
Where they sought Him, there they found Him,
With His virgin mother by.

Lo, He slumbers in His manger,
Where the horned oxen fed;
—Peace, my darling! here's no danger!
Here's no ox anear thy bed.

—Mayest thou live for ever near Him,
Trust and love Him all thy days;
Then go dwell for ever near Him,
See His face and sing His praise."

Like Heber, Dr. Watts was an easy versifier, and very smart—as we should say to-day—at repartee. He was by no means tall, and one day, while walking in the park, some fine, strapping young fellows jeered at him for the shortness of his stature. He turned to them and said:—

"Were I so tall to reach the Pole,
Or mete the ocean with a span,
I must be measured by my soul,
The mind's the standard of the man."

And the good Doctor was right, was he not?

My space is almost exhausted, and I cannot even mention all the famous Christmas hymns, but I must not omit the

C. F. Alexander

Author of "Once in Royal David's City."

great Latin one, "Adeste Fideles." The best-known translation is Canon Oakeley's, "O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant." This hymn is only fifty years old—quite young for a hymn—but it has been re-translated into all kinds of outlandish tongues and is universally popular. It is invariably sung to the tune, "Adeste Fideles," which fits it admirably.

It must suffice to merely mention Thring's

"From the Eastern mountains,
Pressing on they come,
Wise men in their wisdom
To His humble home."

and Rowe's beautiful lyric, "Cradled in a manger meanly," with its fine verse:—

"Enter, then, O Christ most Holy;
Make a Christmas in my heart;
Make a Heaven of my manger;
It is Heaven where Thou art"

and also Bishop Phillips Brooks', "O little town of Bethlehem," which concludes with the following tender verse:—

"O Holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sins and enter in;
Be born in us to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel."

Yes, we must pass these by, and conclude with Mrs. Alexander's hymn, "Once in Royal David's city." The lady who wrote this beautiful hymn wrote many others equally beautiful, and one, at least, which sets her name in the very first rank of English hymn-writers. Wherever the name of Christ is preached, not only in this country, but

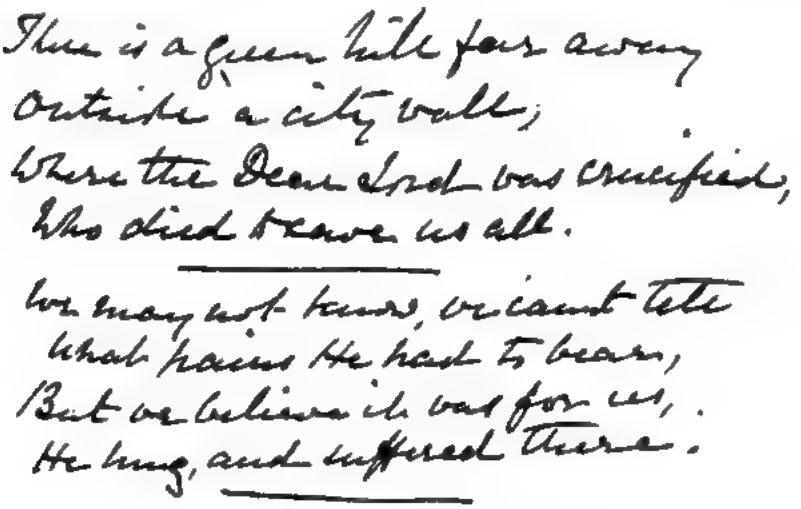
"By many an ancient river,
By many a palmy plain,"

Mrs. Alexander's sublimely simple words are sung.

"There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified
Who died to save us all."

This hymn has its Christmas message, too, for it was written when its authoress was sitting by the bedside of a sick child, and, depend upon it, however many presents you and I may get at Christmas-time, unless we give something which costs us, not money, but service and sacrifice, we shall not have a truly happy Christmas. For, as the hymn says,

"Oh dearly, dearly has He loved,
And we must love Him too,
And trust in His redeeming Blood,
And try His works to do."



Facsimile of "There is a green hill far away."

TALES OF THE FAR WEST.

By FRANKLIN WELLES CALKINS,

Author of "Across the Wilderness," &c.

Illustrated by E. F. SKINNER.

No. 9.—THE OWL CREEK BIGHORN.

ONE autumn day, not many months ago, Mr. Septimus Conant, an English sportsman, came in at our ranch from his camp in Owl Creek Mountains with an exciting story of a big-horn buck of enormous horns and great size, which he and his Indian guide had hunted unsuccessfully for eleven days. Mr. Conant had secured a photograph at forty yards which quite justified his enthusiasm.

Mr. Conant is one of those most humane and delightful of sportsmen—a camera-hunter. As we at Black Horse Ranch only kill game in season and for our own table use, Mr. Conant's attitude toward our big game makes him always a welcome visitor.

In the case of the great ram, however, which seemed to stand fully four feet in height at the shoulders and to have horns measuring forty inches on the curve and not less than twenty inches in circumference at the base, the attitude of the English hunter changed. He was exceedingly desirous of adding the buck's skin, horns and hoofs to his collection of mounted trophies.

After the one snapshot with his camera, which had caught the ram upon the crest of a "hog-back," outlined against a clear sky, neither the hunter nor his guide, although they had hunted the ram for two weeks, had succeeded in getting a fair shot at him. And yet the ram had stuck persistently to his limited domain, a cluster of high mountain ridges cut with cañons and held within a single loop of the mountain stream.

Mr. Conant, being now obliged to leave for England, offered my brother Ferd and me five hundred dollars for the ram's carcase, packed in snow and delivered whole to a taxidermist in Chicago, whose address he gave us. He drew a map of the mountain ridges, summits, gulches and cañons within the circuit of the ram's feeding-ground. We felt sure that we should be able to earn the five hundred dollars soon after the first snow-fall.

For that we had to wait until the eighteenth of December—but then it came right, falling straight down in great feather-flakes to the depth of a foot or more. This kind of snow makes heavy travel for the big game.

We set out at once upon our mountain ponies for Mr. Conant's camp near Owl Creek timber limits. In his stout log shack we soon made ourselves comfortably at home.

The next morning, clad in white duck and wearing Shoshone snow-shoes, we mounted zig-zag into the realm of the bighorn ram. The mountains rose in white, indefinable billows, like tumbled piles of white clouds, or melted into each other, hiding shadowless cañons and ravines. Not a landmark which the hunter had pencilled was distinctly recognisable.

We had not climbed far before our sense of direction was lost. In this latitude the winter sun is a safe guide at midday only. The white glare of the mountains, despite our helmet visors, was almost intolerable at times.

Before noon the sun was aflame with uncommon glory and soon our eyes were half-blinded in its glare. At about midday we "jumped" a band of elk, and, as we both missed broadside shots at less than a hundred yards, we determined at once to return to camp and manufacture a better sort of protection for our eyes.

In making a short cut campward we came face to face with an enormous bighorn buck on the very crest of a sharp ridge. He had not been expecting hunters, despite the shots, which he must have heard, for he jumped from the cover of some boulders not more than fifty yards away. There was no mistaking the big ram. He stood for an instant staring in surprise, just as he had stood when Mr. Conant got the snapshot with his camera.

Before we could unshoulder our rifles to shoot, there was a flurry of snow, a glimmer of black heels, and the ram plunged in tremendous ploughing leaps down the mountain slope. We fired a dozen futile shots at him, while his every jump reminded us of a snow-plough bucking drifts. Then we gave chase, skating down the steep incline until our shoes took the surface, when, like skee-leapers, and trailing our guns for steerage, we coasted down the steep.

We were too intent upon taking the ram to reck of danger. There were no trees nor bushes—only occasional boulders and rough spots upon the slope. Light as the snow was, our speed increased until our shoes barely skimmed its surface. The wind whistled past our ears and cut our cheeks. On we flew, swooping down, a pair of human hawks, upon the ram.

The big fellow swerved neither to right nor to left and we were almost upon him when he gave a great outward leap and dropped out of sight.

Cunning brute! In the same instant we shot down a steep slope, douched through a narrow drift, shot over the rim of a ledge and went whirling through more than a hundred feet of space. What were our thoughts? Indeed, I thought of nothing, but felt a thrilling sense of exhilaration, as of having left my body and all grosser things behind. Then, without any shock or surprise, I plunged neck and heels into a soft drift, alighting, however, without hurt or even a severe concussion.

Buried deep in the snow-drift, I nevertheless scrambled toward the surface, my first thought being that now we might catch the ram; for instantly I had heard the animal's puffs and snorts as it, too, struggled to get out of the snow-heap. Then I heard my brother also fighting his way upward. We were buried, all of us, to the depth of fifteen or twenty feet in light snow, which had "coned" over the ledge in a conical ridge along its base.

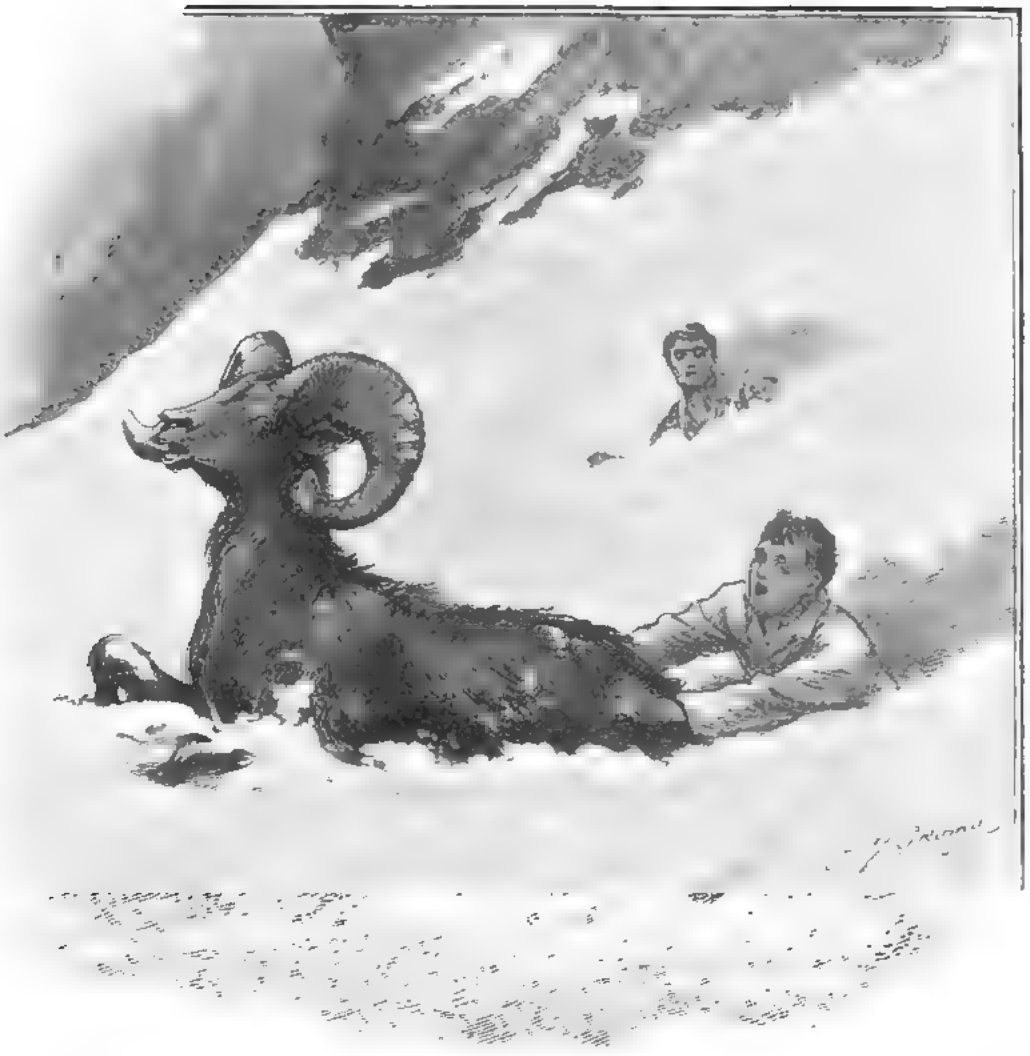
Ferd got to the surface first, going out at the side of the snow-heap. He had alighted almost on top of the ram. As I crawled out into daylight I heard him shouting: "Franz! Franz! Quick, quick! I've got 'im!"

I floundered out to find my brother with both hands gripped in the long hair of the sheep's back, and the big ram, plunging and snorting, sunk to the middle of its sides in the drift.

I scrambled forward and flung myself upon the animal. Then for several minutes we fought valiantly, trying to throw the ram or to hold him for a knife-thrust in neck or heart—for our guns were both buried. We could at once have hacked and maimed the big sheep hopelessly with our hunting-knives, but that would have ruined his skin for mounting

We got some painful contusions from the stout fellow's heels and horns as we tumbled over and over in the deep snow. Sometimes we were on top and sometimes the ram was. More than once we could have held him down, but the slope of the drift gave him the advantage, and we finally slid, rolled, and tumbled to the base of the snow-heap.

Once his feet touched *terra firma* the ram shook us off as he might have shaken off snow-flakes. Then, as we rose to our feet, the plucky fellow turned and butted me heavily into the drift. He would have served my brother likewise, but Ferd fell upon his face



I FLOUNDERED OUT TO FIND MY BROTHER WITH BOTH HANDS GRIPPED IN THE LONG HAIR OF THE SHEEP.

and lay half-buried in snow. Neither of us dared stir while the ram stood wagging his mighty horns and threatening us in wheezy snorts.

Then, finding he had cowed us to submission, and unable to butt in the snow, the huge buck wheeled and trotted around the ledge without once deigning to stop or look back at us. We scrambled at once for our rifles, but a full hour had passed before we succeeded in uncovering both the guns and our snow-shoes. We were, too, so nearly snow-blind that we had difficulty in finding our way to camp.

We spent the remainder of the afternoon and evening in fashioning snow-goggles of wood made upon the Eskimo and Indian pattern, and the next morning returned upon our last tracks to take up the trail of the buck.

Now we felt certain of securing our game, provided no snow should fall for several days. We had only to trail the big ram down, wearing him out as he wallowed in deep snows, over which we skimmed with ease. Hardly three hours had passed before we came upon him feeding upon lichens in a rocky gulch.

As he sprang away up a long, steep slope, we emptied the magazines of our repeaters, filling the gulch with smoke and the smell

of powder. Thirty shots were fired before the ram disappeared over the crest of a ridge, yet not a bullet hit him. The narrow slits in our snow-goggles, which admitted all the light our eyes could bear, were not conducive to accuracy in snap-shooting, especially at creatures in active and erratic motion.

Plainly, we would have to secure a standing shot at the buck; and we took up his trail again, determined to follow with greater caution when his snowtracks showed particularly fresh.

We did not again see the ram on that day, but he led us in a grand circuit over the mountain steeps. The big sheep seemed all at once to have forsaken the tactics which so often foiled Mr. Conant. At night, however, his trail descended toward Owl Creek Valley, and at sundown we left it within half a mile of the shack.

On the following morning the sky was again overcast and there was a thick mist upon the mountain-tops and a distant, monotonous roar, which told of high wind and a fierce blizzard in progress. But the wind did not strike nor the snow drift upon the Owl Creek slopes, so we set out hopefully upon the trail of the ram. Our goggles could not be discarded, and we did not believe the sheep would mount into the region of the storm, which its instinct must yesterday have foretold.

Other animals, too, had been driven into the foot-hills and wolf-tracks were numerous in the ravines.

At length, as we were following a fresh trail along the rim of a cañon, my brother, in advance, suddenly halted, sank upon his knees and motioned me down behind. Crouching still lower, I crept forward. Ferd turned and spoke in a low voice.

"Careful, Franz!" he said. "There's a sight good for sore eyes down in the gulch! Now take a peep down here into this notch."

THE BIG-HORN BUCK WAS MAKING THE FIGHT OF HIS LIFE.

I peered over the projection of the ledge. At the distance of a hundred yards or so, under the foot of an opposing ledge, a small band of bighorn, headed by the enormous ram, were fighting with a pack of buffalo wolves.

The buck, two ewes and a yearling ram were "standing off" five big gray wolves of the sort that easily pull down cows and well-grown steers. The ewes and the smaller buck, with their short, sharp horns and keen-edged hoofs, were fighting cautiously and as if wearied from a long tussle with their savage foes.

But the great ram! His fighting was worth a long day's tramp to see. He charged again and again with quick leaps into the midst of the snapping pack, thrusting to right and to left with the keen points of his curved horns, striking savagely with his big

hoofs, and wheeling with lightning-like precision back into position as the wolves scattered to gather for a fresh attack.

The vicious brutes were enraged beyond measure, having apparently played too long a waiting and cautious game. Their red lips and white teeth showed wickedly as they snarled and snapped, or flung themselves howling and panting upon the snow. The big-horn buck was making the fight of his life, no doubt, to save the weary, half-exhausted band, for it was evident that he could at any moment have fled alone in safety. Constantly the wolves tried to leap past the bucks—for the young one was a bold and vicious fighter, too—and to fling themselves upon the ewes. Cunning brutes! One would leap at the big ram's front, snapping its teeth in his face, but jump quickly away when it had provoked a charge, while its mates would rush in with fresh attempts to pull down the smaller sheep.

Then would follow some seconds of mad, all-round fighting, until the large ram again sprang, striking viciously among the besiegers. He never failed to scatter them and to defend his position in front of the little company. There were blood-spots upon the snow and the largest of the big wolves limped, apparently from a hard stroke upon the shoulder.

For five minutes or more we watched this desperate battle in the cañon notch; then we crept back to take up the trail of the ram, which we knew must lead, by the nearest accessible descent, into the cañon.

When we had crawled out from the last sheltering point, to confront the fighting animals, we were in time for a thrilling scene. There had evidently just occurred a general *mêlée* of the fighters, during which the big ram had pinned a gray wolf upon its back and had jammed a point under the animal's shoulder-blade, inclosing its body wedged within the curve of his horn.

Thus he held the kicking, howling brute, and in the same instant charged upon two wolves which had thrown one of the ewes upon her back and were about to throttle her. The other ewe and the small ram were each chasing a wolf about the trodden ground they had been fighting over.

The big ram easily beat the two wolves off their struggling victim. Then he dashed headlong against projecting rocks, butting, slatting, and striking with fore-hoofs at the kicking brute impaled upon his horn. After these vicious and lightning-like evolutions had been continued for a moment, the ram leaped up, half-turning in the air, and with a mighty sidewise wrench flung the battered carcase of his dead foe upon the snow.

During this sharp struggle the free wolves avoided encounter with the ram and sought again to fasten themselves upon the bleeding ewe; but we had now crawled to within thirty steps of the absorbed fighters, and the double report of our guns ended their battle. One wolf was killed and another mortally hurt by the shots, and sheep and wolves sprang apart in equal affright.

The unhurt wolves charged past us within a dozen steps, but only one got out of the notch. While we were shooting the fierce brutes the smaller sheep cowered, huddling together in the shelter of overhanging rocks, but the larger buck, with horns raised high, stood upon the trampled snow staring at us, whistling shrilly through his nostrils and stamping defiantly with his forefeet.

We now stepped back a few paces from the centre of the notch, and the small sheep, seeing a widened line of retreat, leaped to the opposite ledge and hurtled by along its base.

Not so the great ram. Left alone, he stood for an instant, still regarding us sternly. Then, with no weaklings to protect, with head lifted high and stately tread, he walked, a noble sight, straight down the centre of the notch. His steps were quick and somewhat nervous, and yet his movement was unhurried.

He seemed to say to us: "If you are my enemies, then indeed I am helpless; if you are my friends, you will not harm me."

As he passed within ten yards, he seemed to shrink to half his former size; every coarse, blue-gray hair lay straight down upon his skin, and in the sunken ball and tense expression of his yellow-white eye we read his expectation of instant death.

Shoot that grand, brave animal? Not all the wealth of Mr. Conant could have hired us to harm a hair of him! He walked on, his step quickening to a trot until, without once turning a backward glance, he disappeared behind a point of rocks.

We took the wolf-pelts, returned to camp, and finally reached home in time for Christmas dinner, well content to leave the valiant ram to rule in his kingdom. And we know that when the generous Englishman returns he will hunt the Owl Creek big-horn with his camera only.

STAMP STORIES.

THE OLD FAG likes his Christmas number to be an irresistible budget of stories for the fireside. So it comes about that even the Stamp Editor has to lay aside for the occasion the more serious study of philately, and rake up from his memory all the good stamp stories he has heard during the previous twelve months, that he may pass muster as a satisfactory contributor to the Christmas number of THE CAPTAIN.

STEALING A MARCH.

A small party of well-known specialists were dining together one evening when the conversation turned on the rarity of a certain stamp. One after another declared that it was a variety of the greatest scarcity, and that it was to be found in very few collections. Scarcely one present could boast of a fine copy. One, however, said he had had a copy offered him only a few days since. The price was so high that it nearly took his breath away, but after what had been said about its great rarity he thought he would secure it. He was very careful not to give any clue as to the whereabouts of that precious copy, for he quietly made up his mind to be early on the scene the very next morning. He had known that it was a rarity, but until that night he had no idea that it was so scarce.

The next morning he wended his way to the shop of the London stamp dealer who had offered him the gem.

But, alas! on the very threshold of the shop he met one of his friends of the previous evening coming out.

"Ah! good morning," said he, in his most matter-of-fact style, but with an inward fear that he had been forestalled.

"Good morning," said the other, with a twinkle of the eye as he added, "You are too late; I've got it! You were careful not to let out where your rarity was to be had, but I guessed that such a stamp could only be at one of two places in the Strand, so I came straight here and got it first shot. Another time, when you know of something good, don't advertise the fact, even to your friends. The temptation is too great for frail human nature."

UNPROFITABLE SWOPPING.

Some boys are a bit sharper than they need be in their own interests. Some boys dearly love a bargain in stamps. It is a failing that runs through all grades of stamp collectors, from the boy to the specialist.

One day a sharp-looking lad entered a stamp dealer's shop in New York, and asked for some United States stamps.

"There you are, my lad," said the dealer, as he placed a book of stamps on the counter in front of him. "Pick what you want." The boy made his selection, paid his money, and left the shop.

In a few minutes he was back. "See here, Mister, this stamp has got a corner off."

"Has it, my lad?" said the dealer, taking the stamp and examining it, and adding, "Very well, there's the book. Pick another."

The boy selected another and more perfect copy, but when he got outside the door he turned round and, with a broad grin, shouted, "Done ye, Mister. That old torn stamp was out of my collection, and now I've swopped it for a nice clean one."

The stamp dealer, still holding that stamp, looked after the boy with a quiet smile. The stamp was slightly torn at one corner. Nevertheless, it was a very saleable specimen of a great rarity, known as the 15 cents United States of 1869, with inverted centre, and was worth from £15 to £20.

SOME CURIOUS LETTERS.

I have been the recipient of some curious letters in the shape of inquiries about stamps and stamp collecting. People get strange ideas into their heads as to the value of stamps. After the auction sale of a great rarity there are generally many offers of what are hopefully thought to be similar stamps. The published results of the auction sales of the black English pennies some years ago, when the V.R. variety regularly fetched from £10 to £14, were most prolific in offers of similar stamps. A couple of dear old maiden ladies journeyed all the way from Bristol to London with several penny black English, carefully preserved on the folded letters, probably treasured love letters of their early youth, and, entering a stamp auctioneer's office, unfolded the small parcel, daintily wrapped up in a silk handkerchief. It was a bitter disappointment when the auctioneer explained that it was only the black penny with the initial letters "V.R." in the upper corners that was rare, that the penny black without those magic letters was only worth a few pence, and that, unfortunately, theirs were not of the "V.R." persuasion.

Messrs. Whitfield King and Co., who do a large business in approval sheets, have more than once received what the Chancellor of the Exchequer calls "conscience money." Here is a recent case. The letter is from Mexico, and bears a date of this year. "Gentlemen, when I was at school at Eastbourne, I ordered from you (I suppose about the year 1887) a sheet of stamps valued at 14s. (fourteen shillings). I never paid you for this sheet, but as far as I can remember spent the money on sweets. Therefore I now send you a draft for £2, endorsed in your name, to make amends. With sincere apologies, I remain, &c."

Here is another curiosity, this time evidently from a negro in West Africa. It is dated this year from Sierra Leone, and is addressed to Messrs. Lawn and Barlow, who had acknowledged a previous "conversation" from this gentleman. "Sirs, Ever sinc I have the pleasure of your conversation, I consider it to be a wost of time. So now I make it a motion now, and I trust I will please ye well not to waist your time. I will just axe ye kindly to send me your full catalogue and price list, trusting ye will not fail to do so. No more, I close to usual yours, &c."

Here is a curious specimen from my CAPTAIN correspondence:—"Dear Sir, I have a colection of stamps will you kindly let me know the true value of Foreign Stamps the diffrant stamps that are most Valuebal to-day I hear enclose a few stamps for inspection you may keep for your trouble the enclosed envelope is my addres will you kindly write to the addres as Early as Pasabel." The stamps enclosed were remnants of the very commonest kind, in various stages of decay.

RARE STAMPS IN AN OFFERTORY.

An offertory in a church would be a singular place to look for rare stamps, but such things have happened as the giving of valuable stamps for church purposes, and rarities have been found amongst the donations of a congregation. Some foreign missionary branches of church work make a regular revenue out of stamps. The most valuable stamp donation to an offertory occurred some years ago in British Guiana. An old lady, who had saved up some of the rare old early issues of British Guiana, well knowing their rarity, put a pair of the rare 2c. circular of 1850 into the offertory of her church. When questioned afterwards as to whether she knew what she had given, she assured her friends that she knew what she had done, and that she had always intended her church to have those stamps. They were accordingly turned into money and realised £200 They were subsequently re-sold for £1,000.

Reviews, &c.

CATALOGUE FOR 1905.

Messrs. Whitfield King and Co. send us their "Universal Standard Catalogue of the Postage Stamps of the World" for 1905. It comprises all stamps issued to the end of September, 1904. The Multiple CA. watermark is given a short shrift, for it is dismissed as being too slight a variety to deserve separate cataloguing. The publishers have compiled the following interesting statistics from their catalogue:—

"The total number of all known varieties of postage stamps issued by all the Governments of the world up to the present time is 19,242, of this number, 205 have been issued in Great Britain, and 5,711 in the various British Colonies and Protectorates, leaving 13,326 for the rest of the world. Dividing the totals amongst the Continents, Europe issued 4,089, Asia 3,628, Africa 4,005, America, including the West Indies, 6,095, and Oceania 1,425. A comparison of these figures with those published in March, 1903, will show that 1,860 new varieties of stamps have been issued throughout the world in the space of eighteen months. The Republic of Salvador has issued more varieties

of postage stamps than any other country, the number being 450. Poland and Wadhwan have each found a solitary specimen suffice for their postal needs."

Fortunately for judicious collectors, the Republic of Salvador might issue a dozen varieties per hour throughout the year without affecting their pockets. No sane collector buys such rubbish.

The Stamps of Great Britain.

Mr. Fred J. Melville, President of the Junior Philatelic Society, has written, and his society has published, a very excellent and simple little guide for the young collector of the stamps of Great Britain. It does not claim to include any new matter of scientific value, but what is much more to the point for the young collector, it does simplify the issues, whilst yet including all necessary details, and it is fully illustrated. Such a handbook has been much needed, even by the general collector, who is appalled by the ponderous work on English stamps issued by the London Philatelic Society. In an appendix Mr. Melville has been permitted to reprint the Prince of Wales's recently published "Notes on the Postal Adhesive Issues of the United Kingdom during the present reign." The price of the book is one shilling, and it may be had from Mr. H. F. Johnson, 11, Trigon-road, Clapham, London.

A New Tweezers.

No careful collector picks up his stamps with his fingers. He handles them tenderly, especially if they happen to be mint copies, with a neat tweezers, a kind of tongs. Messrs. Lawn and Barlow send us a sample of a novelty in this direction. Instead of the ordinary tongs action, closing with pressure, this new tweezers works the reverse way. To open the points the spring is pressed, and when released it closes and retains its hold on the stamp. It is a very neat and superior article, and by far the best we have yet seen.

Notable New Issues.

With the exception of additions to the new watermark, Multiple CA., there is quite a lull in the output of new issues, and there are no signs of any impending changes in any country.

The most notable news concerns our own English halfpenny, which is to be changed in shade to a pale yellow-green. The present shade is what would be termed pale blue-green. I cannot say when the change is to be made, but it will probably be in the hands of some of our readers before this number of The Captain reaches them.

The recently chronicled Chilian provisionals will no doubt last till the dispute with the American Bank Note Co. is settled as to who shall print the next supplies. Meanwhile, nothing further has been heard as to the proposed issue of local engravings.

The Multiple CA. watermark comes in slowly. Already it has made its appearance on the large size high values, which have hitherto been uniformly watermarked CC. Collectors should not delay in filling up any blanks they may have in any series of the single CA., as that watermark may be supplanted any day. Some of the king's heads with the single CA. will have but a short life, and may be difficult to get later on.

Curacao.—This Dutch colony has been provided with a series of new designs as illustrated. The five lower values, including the 5 cent, are of Type I., and the higher values of Type II. They are all Perf. 12½.

Type I.

Type II

New designs. Perf. 12½.

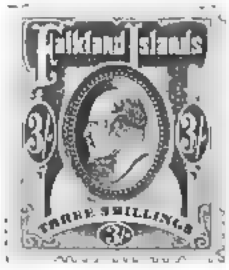
Type I.

1 cent, olive.
2 cents, brown.
2½ cents, green.
3 cents, orange.
5 cents, carmine.

Type II.

10 cents, slate.
15 cents, brown.
25 cents, mauve.
30 cents, red-brown.

Falkland Islands.—King's head stamps have been issued for this little colony. The values received are ½d., 1d., 2½d., and 3s. All bear



the new Multiple CA. watermark, including the 3s. value in the large size. The designs of the stamps are practically unaltered, except for a beaded ring, which narrows the oval for the smaller portrait of the king's head. The 3s. value is evidently intended to take the place of the 2s. 6d. of the queen's head series.

Wmk, Multiple CA. Perf. 14.

½d., green.
1d., carmine.
2½d., blue.
3s., green.

Gambia.—The 1d. value of the current king's head series has been received with the new Multiple CA. watermark.

Wmk. Multiple CA. Perf. 14.

1d. Carmine.

India.—I am indebted to Mr. H. J. A. Hervey for the following extract of recent date:—"It will be of interest to philatelists," says the *Rangoon Gazette*, "to know that the four and a-half anna stamp, surcharged two and a-half annas thirteen years ago, is now available at the Rangoon Post Office. The ordinary two and a-half anna green stamps have been out for some months past, and a few days ago the blue stamp of the same denomination also gave out. The old surcharged stamps were then unearthed from somewhere and are again used for foreign postage."

Somaliland.—The stamps of the new king's head series are coming to hand very slowly. In the June number of THE CAPTAIN we chronicled the ½d., and we have just received the 1d. of the same design.

Wmk. Single CA. Perf. 14.

½d., green.
1d., carmine.

Straits Settlements.—Another value is to be added to the new king's head series, an 8c. value, with the larger portrait of the king, and, as in the case of the king's head stamps of the Cape of Good Hope, the design is varied in each value. The new series up to date is as follows, all so far on the old Single CA. paper:—

Wmk. Single CA. Perf. 14.

1 cent, green.
3 cents, purple.
4 cents, purple on red paper.
8 cents, purple on blue paper.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

A. G. Harrison.—Gambia multiple CA., 1d.
Ewen.—Falkland Islands, ½d., 1d., 2½d., and 3s.; Somaliland, 1d.; Straits Settlements, 8c.
Whitfield King and Co.—Curaçao, 1c., 2c., 2½c., 3c., 5c., 10c., 15c., 25c., and 30c.; Falkland Islands, ½d.; Straits Settlements, 8c.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. T. D. (Blackheath).—1. Gibbons. 2. You can ascertain the catalogue value of your collection by consulting a catalogue. 3. The firm you inquire about is thoroughly reliable. 4. The jubilee Post Office envelope is catalogued at 1s. 6d. 5. The 1904 series of United States is simply a series of labels officially issued to advertise a local show, and to swindle stamp collectors to pay for the advertising. Advertisement labels are not chronicled as postage stamps in THE CAPTAIN. 6. The British North Borneo stamps overprinted "British Protectorate" are British North Borneo Company rubbish. Most sane collectors now exclude North Borneo.

Porthos (Glasgow).—There have been two issues of 10s. stamps for British Central Africa. The 1891 10s. deep green, i.e., the British South Africa stamp overprinted "B. C. A.," is catalogued at 12s. 6d. unused, and the 10s. olive green of 1897 is catalogued at the same price unused. The king's head series for British Central Africa, which you say you have not seen mentioned in the philatelic columns of THE CAPTAIN, was fully chronicled so long ago as the January number.

S. G. M. (London).—Yes. We will publish shortly instructions how to use the perforation gauge.

Princeps Pacis (Preston).—Certainly your Siam with the inverted "t" is more valuable because of the error. It is catalogued by Gibbons, but not priced. I cannot, therefore, quote the value; possibly it would be between 5s. and 10s. I do not recognise the Victoria you describe.

H. L. D. (Glasgow).—There are two Mulready envelopes—1d. printed in black, and 2d. printed in blue. The 1d. is catalogued at 17s. 6d. and the 2d. at 20s. unused. You might send them for sale to Messrs. Ventom, Bull, and Cooper, Stamp Auctioneers, 35 Old Jewry, London, E.C

P. H. H. (Midlands).—Do as advised in preceding reply to H. L. D. If in good condition your N.S.W. may fetch a good price, but you must not expect to get the full catalogue quotation; more likely half, or even less.

Muriel (Blantyre).—I am glad to hear that you are getting on so nicely with your collection. Never disfigure it with a damaged or heavily cancelled stamp. Don't waste money or time on Central American Republics, North Borneo, or Labuan. And you will also do wisely to exclude Unpaids, Officials, and envelopes. Give the preference whenever possible to unused, spotlessly clean.

R. A. R. A., B.A. (India).—I will write the firm you complain about, but I think there must be some misunderstanding, as the firm is of excellent repute.

A. L. S. (Whitby).—English officials are not priced unused in the catalogues now, as their sale is prohibited by the authorities. There are several Exchange Societies, but as I have no personal knowledge of any I cannot recommend one. Some fellow collector may be able to help you, but you will have to be very careful. A collector told me that he had recently lost over £100 worth of stamps in an exchange club. The Birmingham Philatelic Society runs an Exchange Club, but that, I am afraid, is too large for you. It has the reputation of being the best.

AT HICKSON'S.

By F. L. Morgan.

Illustrated by A. Pearse.

No. 3.—THE COMING OF STANBOROUGH.

"LET HARRIS ALONE!" COMMANDED SHE.

I.

RONALD ALGERNON STANBOROUGH was English, a gentleman, and a straight fellow, with no side to speak of. He was just the kind of Englishman that Hickson's could appreciate, but when he came to the college he was handicapped by an unlucky speech (made by a pompous and narrow-minded man). This was it.

"Now, my boy, don't forget what I have told you. If it were not Sir Algernon's direct wish, I should hesitate to send you to a place like Hickson's. From what I have heard, the scholars are a mixed lot—very mixed—and not at all fit companions for your father's son. But as it is his wish you must make the best of it. Pick your friends, and don't, for Heaven's sake, bring home to England any of their vulgar American expressions."

Stanborough looked out of the carriage window (they were a few miles from San Francisco) in silence. He was used to this kind of talk from his father's solicitor, and took it for what it was worth. Not so the little pale-faced, red-haired girl who sat opposite him. She listened to these remarks in astounded indignation. Had Ronald known she was Jane Hobbs, of the Junior School, one of the most loyal of Hicksonians, he would probably have changed the conversation. But, you see, he didn't know.

Miss Jane Hobbs entered the lecture hall at Hickson's exactly twenty minutes before Ronald Stanborough. During that time she made good use of her sharp little tongue. Consequently, before he arrived, Hickson's was acquainted with Stanborough's name (in full), his nationality, position, and supposed pride—and Hickson's was prepared accordingly. When Ronald entered, in the company of Johnson, a small boy fresh from Virginia City, there was a dead and ominous silence. Ronald was not a youngster, but his reception struck him as curious, and made him feel a little nervous. He was in a strange country, at a strange school, and being steadfastly regarded by something over a hundred pairs of strange and hostile eyes belonging to both sexes. As they gazed, the eyes became more hostile, for Ronald carried in his face and bearing unmistakable signs of his nationality and of his aristocratic forefathers; and his slight nervousness enhanced these signs, making them "more so." Fellows hide their shyness in many different ways. Ronald Stanborough's way was to look haughty. There-

fore, the more Hickson's frowned on him, the more supercilious his expression became. At last he turned to the fellow nearest him, who happened to be Joseph White, one of the sharpest men in the fifth.

"I was told to come to the lecture hall," said Ronald; "is this right?"

Joseph White looked him up and down for an instant; then he drawled,

"Wa-al, stranger, I calc'late you're real smart. You've hit it in once!"

The Englishman looked round suspiciously. The hundred and odd pairs of eyes were twinkling with amusement; the stern mouths were relaxed.

"I apprehend you've come from England," continued Joseph; "it's a mighty fine country, but I'm darned if you won't hev to look a bit spry while you're at Hickson's. What do you say, bo-oys?"

"That's so," chimed in a shrill voice; "we're a mixed lot, and as we're all hangin' around here he might as well start picking his friends. Seems to me there won't be much cause for jealousy!"

Stanborough looked at the small speaker, and recognising her as the girl who had travelled to San Francisco in the same carriage as himself, he realised what had happened. Flushing at the insult, and calling all the pride inherited from his noble ancestors to his assistance, he turned and walked out of the lecture hall, amid a mighty shout of laughter from the assembled Hicksonians. Thenceforth Stanborough's position was strangely unpleasant. In school he was placed in the fifth, where he was respected for his maths.; but out of school he was regarded merely as an undesirable unit. The seniors ignored him, and the juniors waited for him round corners, each with a Yankee expression ready to be yelled after the arrogant Englishman. Stanborough knew himself to be the injured party, and made no advances towards a better understanding—in which he showed wisdom. Meanwhile, the days were bright and warm, and he had found no cricket. Several solitary explorations had discovered only base-ball.

"Where are the nets?" he asked a junior, as he came out of Carr's one day after school.

The small boy touched his hat, groom-fashion.

"Beg pardon, your lordship?"

Ronald looked menacing.

"I said, where are the nets?"

"I cannot inform you, O peerless son of a Peer!" rejoined the junior with unnecessary politeness.

In less time than it takes to write it, Stanborough had him by the collar. Before he could administer the well-deserved chastisement, however, he was confronted by a sixth-form girl—Isabel Uridge.

"Let Harris alone!" commanded she.

Stanborough paused with uplifted hand. "The youngster refused to answer me. I sha'n't hurt him," he said.

"No, I'll see that you don't! Let him go at once, or I shall report you."

Stanborough raised his brows in perplexity. How should he explain to this tiresome girl?

"It's all right, you know—only the kid cheeked me."

"Well, I expect you provoked him."

Ronald loosened his hold in sheer amazement. Provoked him! Great Cæsar—to be accused of provoking a junior!

"Fagging and bullying," continued the girl, in cold, level tones, "are not allowed at Hickson's, so you had better suppress your ancient British practices while you are here!" With that she walked away, leaving Stanborough to stare after her long thin plait in stupefied astonishment. It was the last straw. With a dangerous expression on his face, he swung round and nearly knocked over Mr. Carr, the boys' housemaster. Alfred Carr was not a particularly observant man, but the dangerous expression made him pause.

"Ah, Stanborough," he said, "I wonder if you would go over to the junior school and fetch some papers I left on the master's desk. I don't want to leave them about, and I haven't time to see about it now. Perhaps you wouldn't mind getting them for me, and leaving them in my study as you go by."

"Certainly, sir," replied Stanborough, absently.

"Thank you. You'll find them in the third class-room."

Ronald turned and went straight to the junior school. The third class-room was empty, save for one small figure close to the window.

Stanborough paused, and his face darkened at finding himself at such close quarters with the cause of his unpleasant position at Hickson's. For the small figure belonged to Miss Jane Hobbs. Her head

was on the desk, her face hidden by thick waves of red hair. Nearly all Bowen's, from her own classmates up to the housemaster's wife, had tried (and failed) to bring the said hair under subjection—and into a pig-tail. But it still held out, and remained an unsubdued and fiery mop all over her small head. Ronald walked across the room and found Mr. Carr's papers. The head on the desk did not move. Was she asleep? At that instant a long sobbing breath came from between the parted lips, and a little pale face, with closed eyes, and smeared with tear stains, was turned slightly towards him. Ronald looked out of the window and noted the glory of the day. Then a wave of pity swept over him. After all, she was only a little kid! Beside her was an exercise book, on the open page of which were set two vulgar fractions, of the "simplify the following" kind. Miss Hobbs had evidently struggled with them, for several sheets of paper, covered with "working," were scattered about. Ronald crept up and leant over the sleeper. In less than two minutes the "following" were "simplified," and the correct answers written clearly within two inches of Jane's nose. Five minutes later, as Ronald was turning out of the junior court, Jane Hobbs came flying after him.

"I woke up when somebody shut the door, and I looked out of the window to see who it was," she explained breathlessly.

"Oh," answered Stanborough, without enthusiasm, looking down at the small freckled face.

"Yes, and I—I wish I hadn't told them what that old man who was with you in the train said." The sentence was involved, but the meaning was clear enough to Stanborough. He did not answer. Two great greenish-grey eyes were brimming over with tears.

"I—I'm real sorry."

Ronald looked round anxiously. Was the kid going to cry?

"All right," he said, hastily, "don't worry."

"But," with an unmistakable sob, "they don't like you now."

"Well, I dare say I shall live through it," replied Stanborough, with mild sarcasm. There was a short silence while Jane dried her eyes. They had walked as far as the senior field, and Ronald marvelled at its emptiness.

THE THIRD CLASS-ROOM WAS EMPTY, SAVE FOR ONE SMALL FIGURE.

"Where do they play cricket?" he asked suddenly.

"They don't."

"Don't! *Don't* play cricket?"

"Well, not much. Jim Chaldwick persuades some of Carr's to make up an eleven just to play against the Sharpshooters from San Francisco on Cricket Day; that's all."

"Only one match a year?" Ronald's tone savoured of tragedy.

"Yes—and the Sharpshooters always win." Jane Hobbs was staring at Ronald's face, and trying hard to follow the thoughts

that caused such various expressions to flit across it.

"Say," she said, suddenly, "you like cricket! Shall I bowl some for you?"

Ronald shook his head. He did not relish the idea of being seen with a small girl fagging cricket for him. Eagerly watching, Jane understood.

"Do let me," she pleaded; "not now, but to-morrow early—before chapel. I really can bowl—Jim Chaldwick said so."

II.

JIM CHALDWICK, of the sixth, opened his eyes one morning at half-past five.

"Was I made to lie in bed and keep myself warm?" he asked, misquoting from his favourite Marcus Aurelius, and blinking sleepily at the ceiling. "No," he added, with determination, sitting up suddenly, "I must rise to the work of a human being!"

In half an hour he was strolling across the junior field, sniffing the sweet air and trying to realise what a glorious old world it is after all, when a cricket ball caught him full and forcibly on the shoulder. Jim was the one being at Hickson's (barring Stanborough) who had really discovered cricket. He realised that, as the junior field was empty, this ball must have come from the senior nets, and the fellow that hit it was—well, a cricketer. Therefore Chaldwick slipped the ball into his pocket and started to run—lest he should miss that fellow. When he reached the nets he saw Ronald Stanborough (whom he knew only by reputation) and Jane Hobbs (whom he recognised by the colour of her hair). Chaldwick hurried up, and after a glance at Ronald's lowering face, produced the lost ball.

"Went half way across the junior field," he explained, with a friendly grin; "may I bowl you one or two?"

The Englishman's expression altered at once.

"If you like," he said; "now, kiddie, field—that's right, over there!"

* * * * *

That evening Joseph White and Isabel Uridge, Games Secretary and Treasurer respectively, sat together in a quiet corner of the lecture hall, discussing business. A list of names showed that there were eight base-ball "nines" flourishing, while only seven or eight individual names were placed after cricket.

"Isn't it wretched?" remarked Isabel. "I wish we could drop cricket this year. It doesn't catch on, and we always make a poor show."

"Well, we can't drop it. The Head would kick up a row. Besides, there's Cricket Day—we *must* scratch up some sort of an eleven for that."

"But the Sharpshooters always beat us. I should think we might take it as a foregone conclusion and consider the match as played."

Joseph only smiled at this truly feminine suggestion, for, before he could answer, Jim Chaldwick strolled up and collapsed gracefully on to the floor in front of the harassed managers of Hickson's at play.

"Say," he remarked, cheerfully, "I've made a discovery."

"So've we. Think you'll have to do without cricket this——"

"Oh, bottle up! I've discovered a second British Ranji!"

Joseph White laughed.

"I don't know much about it," he said, "but I rather fancy Ranji isn't British—you rotter!"

"Look here, Joseph White, I tell you the Britisher is a—a——"

"Are you talking of our highly connected Ronald Algernon Stanborough?"

"I said Britisher. Isn't he the only one of the excellent, but somewhat diminutive, island, that has, up to the present, honoured us with his aristocratic presence?"

Isabel Uridge impatiently tapped her pencil on the close-clipped head of Jim Chaldwick.

"Cut it short, James," she said, sharply; "we're busy."

"Oh, all right. Only I thought you'd like to know about Stanborough. I've never seen cricket like his, and he's a real good chap as well. I'm going to hang around him until after Cricket Day."

"What is the use of that? He wouldn't play for us—*now*."

Jim Chaldwick sat up.

"I believe he would if you were to ask him. You—none of us are acting square by the Britisher. We've been kind of caddish to him all round—especially you, Joseph, when he first came, and that red-headed little beast of Bowen's. Seems to me we didn't give him a chance, and it might make things straight between him and us if he were to play for us in the match—savvy? Besides, cricketers are none too frequent at Hickson's."

Joseph nodded thoughtfully.

"All right, we'll think it over. Scoot now, there's a good chap!"

Half an hour later Joseph White formally asked Ronald Stanborough if he would play in Hickson's eleven against the San Francisco Sharpshooters, and Stanborough curtly refused.

III.

CRICKET DAY at Hickson's was regarded more in the light of a social gathering than a match. Friends of the college mustered in full force, to stroll round the grounds, to meet their own particular Hicksonians, and to partake of the light refreshments provided by the Head. Hickson's did not understand cricket; therefore the right spirit was absent. Each fellow played for his own glorification, and so soon as his innings had come to an end, his interest in the match evaporated. The San Francisco men arrived in good time, and soon after, the Hickson eleven (scraped together, by dint of hard labour, by Jim Chaldwick) came straggling on to the field. There were Chaldwick, Smith and Hawkes, of the sixth; Hodgson, Mills, Neeve, and Price, of the fifth; Lawton, of the upper fourth; Paynter, of middle school, and Harris—a junior. A ripple of amusement went round the ropes, and up and down the steps of the pavilion, at the sight of little Harris. He was small, but he was keen. Jim Chaldwick, the captain, counted his men, and looked round anxiously. Where was Tom Marsh—the eleventh man? One of Bowen's juniors came running up to him.

"Please, Chaldwick," she piped, "Tom Marsh asked me to tell you that he won't be able to play this afternoon."

"Why not? The fellow *must* play!"

"But he can't. He's hurt his wrist. The doctor has bound it up, and says——"

Jim rushed over to Joseph White.

"One of our men crippled," he said; "can't play. Whatever shall we do?"

Joseph white looked round.

"There's no one else," he replied; "you'll have to go with a man short."

As Jim groaned, his eye fell on Stanborough, who was standing alone (as usual) just behind White.

"Can you suggest anything, Stanborough?" he asked, with a gleam of hope. There was a short silence. Joseph White stared up at the sky, and Jim Chaldwick looked at Stanborough, who was gazing across the smooth field. It was an awkward moment. At last the Englishman spoke. The position (together with the true, hard ground, and the fairness of the day) was too much for his dignity. He grinned unwillingly.

"Not unless I play myself," he said. "I'm out of practice, but if you like to try me——"

He paused, and Chaldwick with difficulty suppressed a chuckle of triumph as he answered politely, "Thanks, awfully."

The Sharpshooters won the toss, and after an hour's indifferent play were all out for 109. Jim Chaldwick took his place at the wicket opposite Stanborough, feeling that there was more than the result of the match depending on the day's cricket. To him it meant the making or marring of the game for Hickson's—he expected great things from the Englishman. To Stanborough it meant—well, the match and nothing else. He forgot, for the time being, Hickson's animosity towards himself, and remembered only the fact that his side was palpably weak—therefore he must miss nothing. He was a cricketer. He grasped the bat and patted the ground lovingly. He was full of hope. In another minute he stood dazed and astonished, for his middle stump lay on the ground, knocked clean out by a first-class yorker. Stanborough's feelings need no description. Most fellows have experienced them at some time or another. It was just a piece of bad luck. . . .

"Give a dog a bad name and hang him," is a saying of truth, and the silence that greeted Stanborough as he walked back to the pavilion was more expressive than hisses. Hickson's interest in the match flagged, and Hickson's agreed that Jim Chaldwick's talk about the Britisher's cricket had been merely gas. Chaldwick was bitterly disappointed, but he still hoped. He was a good captain, with energy enough for the whole field. Hickson's score had reached 59 (Jim had made 30 of them) when the last man was caught to leg. For their second innings the Sharpshooters were all out for 98, leaving the College with 149 to win. Once more Stanborough and Chaldwick found themselves at the wicket. In two minutes Stanborough had hit two boundaries. Chaldwick followed up with

seven for three balls. But when the score reached 19, Jim was bowled with a fairly fast good-length one on the off stump. Hawkes came in, and was out for 0 in his second over. Hodgson, Paynter, and Lawton made 17 between them, to which Ronald put on 20 more. He was playing in his best form. His back play was an unexplained mystery both to Hickson's and the Sharpshooters, and the quick use he made of play anything creditably—except cricket. The day's play was a revelation, and opened up infinite possibilities for the future. And that splendid fellow who was playing so bravely and so whole-heartedly was doing it for Hickson's—and he was a Hicksonian. Therefore, when Stanborough hit three lofty fourers on the on-side, bringing the College score up to 121, Hickson's burst into a universal roar of approval. Ronald

"I WON'T GET OUT, PEER, TILL YOU'VE WON!"

his feet confused their deadliest bowler. When Hickson's last man but one (Neeve) came in, the score was 91—and Stanborough still in. In his third over Neeve retired ignominiously, having knocked off the bails with his own bat.

Little Harris trotted out confidently.

"I won't get out, Peer," he said, "till you've won!"

Hickson's had become interested and excited. It left its feeding and lounging and crowded round the ropes. It could glanced round quickly, and for an instant the thought of what his cricket might do for him at Hickson's crossed his mind. Little Harris's idea of the game seemed to consist chiefly in sticking in and moving his bat as little as possible. He did not attempt to score, but blocked with cheerful certainty. Of course, several runs were lost on account of his diminutive size, but 137 were reached in safety.

"Will Harris hold out?" was the thought of everyone, including Ronald.

"140—141—143—145," declared the scoring board. Then—little Harris' sturdy defence was broken through, and his off stump lay drunkenly across the others.

"Harris, you little brute, *couldn't* you have waited until I had made four more?"

Stanborough's tone was reproachful.

Then he turned and faced the crowd, swarming over the ropes. The hand-shaking that he was submitted to tired his arm more than the making of his "103 not out" had done. Those of them who were not near enough to shake hands, cheered. They yelled until they were hoarse, and then, rushing forward, they raised the protesting Stanborough, gripping any part of him that came handiest, and bore him in triumph from the field.

Thus were cricket and the Britisher admitted to the innermost heart of Hickson's.

[*Another "Hickson" story next month.*]

A TRICK THAT REQUIRES COURAGE.

THIS feat should be first practised upon something pliable and soft, such as a gymnasium mattress. This is necessary, for until one has learned to fall forward correctly it is possible to get a very severe shock. To fall in the proper manner and without fear of injury one must first inflate the chest, throw the head back, and turn the face to one side, then stiffen the body, and boldly fall forward. It will be found that it requires a lot of pluck to do this trick, even upon a soft and springy mattress, but practice will overcome the feeling of nervousness.

FIRST POSITION.

FALL FORWARD.

THE HEAD OF KAYS

A PUBLIC SCHOOL STORY
BY
P. G. WODEHOUSE.
ILLUSTRATED BY
T. M. R. WHITWELL.

SYNOPSIS.

Fenn is head of Kay's—the most disorderly house at Eckleton. His task in ruling such a crew is unsatisfactory enough, but Mr. Kay renders it doubly so by his unreasonable behaviour towards the captain of the house. Fenn is the finest cricketer in the school—having been selected to play for his county in the holidays—and entirely by his efforts Kay's get into the final of the house matches. But Mr Kay, who takes no interest whatever in the athletics of his house, keeps Fenn in on the afternoon of the match, and Kay's crack bat only appears in time to go in last, the consequence being that Kay's lose the match. Feeling naturally runs high against Mr. Kay, who, owing to the illness of a colleague, is called upon to preside over the grand term-end concert—always a solemn and classical affair. Fenn is a performer. Having played a serious piece, an encore being demanded, he breaks into a giddy trifle called the "Coon Band Contest," which sets hundreds of feet stamping. The uproar (led by Kay malcontents) rises to such a pitch that the concert has to be brought to a premature close, and it is feared that the authorities will take action in the matter. On returning to school in September, Kennedy, an intimate friend of Fenn's, is informed that he had been appointed head of Kay's in place of Fenn.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SENSATIONS OF AN EXILE.

"WHAT!" shouted Kennedy.

He sprang to his feet as if he had had an electric shock.

Jimmy Silver, having satisfied his passion for the dramatic by the abruptness with which he had exploded his mine, now felt himself at liberty to be sympathetic.

"It's quite true," he said. "And that's just how I felt when Blackburn told me. Blackburn's as sick as anything. Naturally he doesn't see the point of handing you over to Kay. But the Old Man insisted, so he caved in. He wanted to see you as soon as you arrived. You'd better go now. I'll finish your packing."

This was noble of Jimmy, for of all the duties of life he loathed packing most.

"Thanks awfully," said Kennedy, "but don't you bother. I'll do it when I get back. But what's it all about? What made Kay want a man? Why won't Fenn do? And why me?"

"Well, it's easy to see why they chose you. They reflected that you'd had the advantage of being in Blackburn's with me, and seeing how a house really should be run. Kay wants a head for his house. Off he goes to the Old Man. 'Look here,' he says, 'I want somebody shunted into my happy home, or it'll bust up. And it's no good trying to put me off with an inferior article, because I won't have it. It must be somebody who's been trained from youth up by Silver.' 'Then,' says the Old Man, reflectively, 'you can't do better than take Kennedy. I happen to know that Silver has spent years in showing him the straight and narrow path. You take Kennedy.' 'All right,' says Kay; 'I always thought Kennedy a bit of an ass myself, but if he's studied under Silver he ought to know how to manage a house. I'll take him. Advise our Mr. Blackburn to that effect, and ask him to deliver the goods at his earliest convenience. Adoo, messmate, adoo!' And there you are—that's how it was."

"But what's wrong with Fenn?"

"My dear chap! Remember last term. Didn't Fenn have a regular scrap with Kay, and get shoved into extra for it? And didn't he wreck the concert in the most sportsmanlike way with that encore of his? Think the Old Man is going to take that grinning? Not much! Fenn made a ripping fifty against Kent in the holidays—I saw him do it—but they don't count that. It's a wonder they didn't ask him to leave. Of course, I think it's jolly rough on Fenn, but I don't see that you can blame them. Not the Old Man, at any rate. He couldn't do anything else. It's

all Kay's fault that all this has happened, of course. I'm awfully sorry for you having to go into that beastly hole, but from Kay's point of view it's a jolly sound move. You may reform the place."

"I doubt it."

"So do I—very much. I didn't say you would—I said you might. I wonder if Kay means to give you a free hand! It all depends on that."

"Yes. If he's going to interfere with me as he used to with Fenn he'll want to bring in another head to improve on me."

"Rather a good idea, that," said Jimmy Silver, laughing, as he always did when any humorous possibilities suggested themselves to him. "If he brings in somebody to improve on you, and then somebody else to improve on him, and then another chap to improve on him, he ought to have a decent house in half-a-dozen years or so."

"The worst of it is," said Kennedy, "that I've got to go to Kay's as a sort of rival to Fenn. I shouldn't mind so much if it wasn't for that. I wonder how he'll take it! Do you think he knows about it yet? He didn't enjoy being head, but that's no reason why he shouldn't cut up rough at being shoved back to second prefect. It's a beastly situation."

"Beastly," agreed Jimmy Silver. "Look here," he added, after a pause, "there's no reason, you know, why this should make any difference. To us, I mean. What I mean to say is, I don't see why we shouldn't see each other just as often, and so on, simply because you are in another house, and all that sort of thing. You know what I mean."

He spoke shamefacedly, as was his habit whenever he was serious. He liked Kennedy better than anyone he knew, and hated to show his feelings. Anything remotely connected with sentiment made him uncomfortable.

"Of course," said Kennedy, awkwardly.

"You'll want a refuge," said Silver, in his normal manner, "now that you're going to see wild life in Kay's. Don't forget that I'm always at home in my study in the afternoons—admission on presentation of a visiting-card."

"All right," said Kennedy, "I'll remember. I suppose I'd better go and see Blackburn now."

Mr. Blackburn was in his study. He was obviously disgusted and irritated by what had happened. Loyalty to the headmaster, and an appreciation of his position as a member of the staff led him to try and conceal his feelings as much as possible in his interview with Kennedy, but the latter understood as plainly as if his housemaster had burst into a flow of abuse and complaint. There had always been an excellent understanding—indeed, a friendship—between Kennedy and Mr. Blackburn, and the master was just as sorry to lose his second prefect as the latter was to go.

"Well, Kennedy," he said, pleasantly, "I hope you had a good time in the holidays. I suppose Silver has told you the melancholy news—that you are to desert us this term? It is a great pity. We shall all be very sorry to lose you. I don't look forward to seeing you bowl us all out in the house matches next summer," he added, with a smile, "though we shall expect a few full-pitches to leg, for the sake of old times."

He meant well, but the picture he conjured up almost made Kennedy break down. Nothing up to the present had made him realise the completeness of his exile so keenly as this remark of Mr. Blackburn's about his bowling against the side for which he had taken so many wickets in the past. It was a painful thought.

"I am afraid you won't have quite such a pleasant time in Mr. Kay's as you have had here," resumed the housemaster. "Of course, I know that, strictly speaking, I ought not to talk like this about another master's house: but you can scarcely be unaware of the reasons that have led to this change. You must know that you are being sent to pull Mr. Kay's house together. This is strictly between ourselves, of course. I think you have a difficult task before you, but I don't fancy that you will find it too much for you. And mind you come here as often as you please. I am sure Silver and the others will be glad to see you. Good-bye, Kennedy. I think you ought to be getting across now to Mr. Kay's. I told him that you would be there before half-past nine. Good-night."

"Good-night, sir," said Kennedy.

He wandered out into the house dining-room. Somehow, though Kay's was only next door, he could not get rid of the feeling that he was about to start on a long journey, and would never see his old house again. And in a sense this was so. He would probably visit Blackburn's to-morrow afternoon, but it would not be the same. Jimmy Silver would greet him like a brother, and he would brew in the same study in which he had always brewed, and sit in the same chair; but it would not be the same. He would be an outsider, a visitor, a stranger within the gates, and—worst of all—a Kayite. Nothing could alter that.

The walls of the dining-room were covered with photographs of the house cricket and foot-

ball teams for the last fifteen years. Looking at them, he felt more than ever how entirely his school life had been bound up in his house. From his first day at Eckleton he had been taught the simple creed of the Blackburnite, that Eckleton was the finest school in the three kingdoms, and that Blackburn's was the finest house in the finest school.

Under the gas-bracket by the door hung the first photograph in which he appeared, the cricket team of four years ago. He had just got the last place in front of Challis on the strength of a tremendous catch for the house second in a scratch game two days before the house matches began. It had been a glaring fluke, but it had impressed Denny, the head of the house, who happened to see it, and had won him his place.

He walked round the room, looking at each photograph in turn. It seemed incredible that he had no longer any right to an interest in the success of Blackburn's. He could have endured leaving all this when his time at school was up, for that would have been the natural result of the passing of years. But to be transplanted abruptly and with a wrench from his native soil was too much. He went upstairs to pack, suffering from as severe an attack of the blues as any youth of eighteen had experienced since blues were first invented.

Jimmy Silver hovered round, while he packed, with expressions of sympathy and bitter remarks concerning Mr. Kay and his wicked works, and, when the operation was concluded, helped Kennedy carry his box over to his new house with the air of one seeing a friend off to the parts beyond the equator.

It was ten o'clock by the time the front door of Kay's closed upon its new head. Kennedy went to the matron's sanctum to be instructed in the geography of the house. The matron, a severe lady, whose faith in human nature had been terribly shaken by five years of office in Kay's, showed him his dormitory and study with a lack of geniality which added a deeper tinge of azure to Kennedy's blues. "So you've come to live here, have you?" her manner seemed to say; "well, I pity you, that's all. A nice time *you're* going to have."

Kennedy spent the half-hour before going to bed in unpacking his box for the second time, and arranging his books and photographs in the study which had been Weyburn's. He had nothing to find fault with in the study. It was as large as the one he had owned at Blackburn's, and, like it, looked out over the school grounds.

At half-past ten the gas gave a flicker and went out, turned off at the main. Kennedy lit a candle and made his way to his dormitory. There now faced him the more than unpleasant task of introducing himself to its inmates. He knew from experience the disconcerting way in which a dormitory greets an intruder. It was difficult to know how to begin matters. It would take a long time, he thought, to explain his presence to their satisfaction.

Fortunately, however, the dormitory was not unprepared. Things get about very quickly in a house. The matron had told the housemaids; the housemaids had handed it on to their ally, the boot boy; the bootboy had told Wren, whom he happened to meet in the passage, and Wren had told everybody else.

There was an uproar going on when Kennedy opened the door, but it died away as he appeared, and the dormitory gazed at the newcomer in absolute and embarrassing silence. Kennedy had not felt so conscious of the public eye being upon him since he had gone out to bat against the M.C.C., on his first appearance in the ranks of the Eckleton eleven. He went to his bed and began to undress without a word, feeling rather than seeing the eyes that were peering at him. When he had completed the performance of disrobing, he blew out the candle and got into bed. The silence was broken by numerous coughs, of that short, suggestive type with which the public schoolboy loves to embarrass his fellow man. From some unidentified corner of the room came a subdued giggle. Then a whispered, "Shut *up*, you fool!" To which a low voice replied, "All *right*. I'm not doing anything."

More coughs, and another outbreak of giggling from a fresh quarter.

"Good-night," said Kennedy, to the room in general.

There was no reply. The giggler appeared to be rapidly approaching hysterics.

"Shut up that row," said Kennedy.

The giggling ceased.

The atmosphere was charged with suspicion. Kennedy fell asleep fearing that he was going to have trouble with his dormitory before many nights had passed.

CHAPTER X.

FURTHER EXPERIENCES OF AN EXILE.

BREAKFAST on the following morning was a repetition of the dormitory ordeal. Kennedy walked to his place on Mr. Kay's right, feeling that everyone was looking at him, as indeed they were. He understood for the first time the meaning

of the expression "the cynosure of all eyes." He was modest by nature, and felt his position a distinct trial.

He did not quite know what to say or do with regard to his new house-master at this their first meeting in the former's territory. "Come aboard, sir," occurred to him for a moment as a happy phrase, but he discarded it. To make the situation more awkward, Mr. Kay did not observe him at first, being occupied in assailing a riotous fag at the other end of the table, that youth having succeeded, by a dexterous drive in the ribs, in making a friend of his spill half a cup of coffee. Kennedy did not know whether to sit down without a word or to remain standing until Mr. Kay had time to attend to him. He would have done better to have sat down; Mr. Kay's greeting, when it came, was not worth waiting for.

"Sit down, Kennedy," he said, irritably—rebuking people on an empty stomach always ruffled him. "Sit down, sit down."

Kennedy sat down, and began to toy diffidently with a sausage, remembering, as he did so, certain diatribes of Fenn's against the food at Kay's. As he became more intimate with the sausage he admitted to himself that Fenn had had reason. Mr. Kay meanwhile pounded away in moody silence at a plate of kidneys and bacon. It was one of the many grievances which gave the Kayite material for conversation, that Mr. Kay had not the courage of his opinions in the matter of food. He insisted that he fed his house luxuriously, but he refused to brave the mysteries of its bill of fare himself.

Fenn had not come down when Kennedy went in to breakfast. He arrived some ten minutes later, when Kennedy had vanquished the sausage, and was keeping body and soul together with bread and marmalade.

"I cannot have this, Fenn," snapped Mr. Kay; "you must come down in time."

Fenn took the rebuke in silence, cast one glance at the sausage which confronted him, and then pushed it away with such unhesitating rapidity that Mr. Kay glared at him as if about to take up the cudgels for the rejected viand. Perhaps he remembered that it scarcely befitted the dignity of a house-master to enter upon a wrangle with a member of his house on the subject of the merits and demerits of sausages, for he refrained, and Fenn was allowed to go on with his meal in peace.

Kennedy's chief anxiety had been with regard to Fenn. True, the latter could hardly blame him for being made head of Kay's, since he had not been consulted in the matter, and, if he had been, would have refused the post with horror; but nevertheless the situation might cause a coolness between them. And if Fenn, the only person in the house with whom he was at all intimate, refused to be on friendly terms, his stay in Kay's would be rendered worse than even he had looked for

Fenn had not spoken to him at breakfast, but then there was little table talk at Kay's. Perhaps the quality of the food suggested such gloomy reflections that nobody liked to put them into words.

After the meal Fenn ran upstairs to his study. Kennedy followed him, and opened conversation in his direct way with the subject which he had come to discuss.

"I say," he said, "I hope you aren't sick about this. You know I didn't want to bag your place as head of the house."

"My dear chap," said Fenn, "don't apologise. You're welcome to it. Being head of Kay's isn't such a soft job that one is keen on sticking to it."

"All the same—" began Kennedy.

"I knew Kay would get at me somehow, of course. I've been wondering how all the holidays. I didn't think of this. Still, I'm jolly glad it's happened. I now retire into private life, and look on. I've taken years off my life sweating to make this house decent, and now I'm going to take a rest and watch you tearing your hair out over the job. I'm awfully sorry for you. I wish they'd roped in some other victim."

"But you're still a house prefect, I suppose?"

"I believe so. Kay couldn't very well make me a fag again."

"Then you'll help manage things?"

Fenn laughed.

"Will I, by Jove! I'd like to see myself! I don't want to do the heavy martyr business and that sort of thing, but I'm hanged if I'm going to take any more trouble over the house. Haven't you any respect for Mr. Kay's feelings? He thinks I can't keep order. Surely you don't want me to go and shatter his pet beliefs? Anyhow, I'm not going to do it. I'm going to play 'villagers and retainers' to your 'hero.' If you do anything wonderful with the house, I shall be standing by ready to cheer. But you don't catch me shoving myself forward. Thank 'eaven I knows me place, as the butler in the play says."

Kennedy kicked moodily at the leg of the chair which he was holding. The feeling that his whole world had fallen about his ears was increasing with every hour he spent in Kay's. Last term he and Fenn had been as close

friends as you could wish to see. If he had asked Fenn to help him in a tight place then, he knew he could have relied on him. Now his chief desire seemed to be to score off the human race in general, his best friend included. It was a depressing beginning.

"Do you know what the sherry said to the man who was just going to drink it?" inquired Fenn. "It said, '*Nemo me impune lacessit.*' That's how I feel. Kay went out of his way to give me a bad time when I was doing my best to run his house properly, so I don't see that I'm called upon to go out of my way to work for him."

"It's rather rough on me—" Kennedy began. Then a sudden indignation rushed through him. Why should he grovel to Fenn? If Fenn chose to stand out, let him. He was capable of running the house by himself.

FENN KICKED HIM OUT INTO THE PASSAGE.

"I don't care," he said savagely. "If you can't see what a cad you're making of yourself, I'm not going to try to show you. You can do what you jolly well please. I'm not dependent on you. I'll make this a decent house off my own bat without your help. If you like looking on, you'd better look on. I'll give you something to look at soon."

He went out, leaving Fenn with mixed feelings. He would have liked to have followed him, taken back what he had said, and formed an offensive alliance against the black sheep of the house—and also, which was just as important, against the slack sheep, who were good for nothing, either at work or play. But his bitterness against the house-master prevented him. He was not going to take his removal from the leadership of Kay's as if nothing had happened.

Meanwhile in the dayrooms and studies the house had been holding indignation meetings, and at each it had been unanimously resolved that Kay's had been abominably treated, and that the deposition of Fenn must not be tolerated. Unfortunately, a house cannot do very much when it revolts. It can only show its displeasure in little things, and by an increase of rowdiness. This was the line that Kay's took. Fenn became a popular hero. Fags, until he kicked them for it, showed a tendency to cheer him whenever they saw him. Nothing could paint Mr. Kay blacker in the eyes of his house, so that Kennedy came in for all the odium. The same fags who had cheered Fenn hooted him on one occasion as he passed the junior day-room. Kennedy stopped short, went in, and presented each inmate of the room with six cuts with a swagger-stick. This summary and Captain Kettle-like move had its effect. There was no more hooting. The fags bethought themselves of other ways of showing their disapproval of their new head.

One genius suggested that they might kill two birds with one stone—snub Kennedy and

pay a stately compliment to Fenn by applying to the latter for leave to go out of bounds instead of to the former. As the giving of leave "down town" was the prerogative of the head of the house, and of no other, there was a suggestiveness about this mode of procedure which appealed to the junior dayroom.

But the star of the junior dayroom was not in the ascendant. Fenn might have quarrelled with Kennedy, and be extremely indignant at his removal from the headship of the house, but he was not the man to forget to play the game. His policy of non-interference did not include underhand attempts to sap Kennedy's authority. When Gorrick, of the Lower Fourth, the first of the fags to put the ingenious scheme into practice, came to him, still smarting from Kennedy's castigation, Fenn promptly gave him six more cuts, worse than the first, and kicked him out into the passage. Gorrick naturally did not want to spoil a good thing by giving Fenn's game away, so he lay low and said nothing, with the result that Wren and three others met with the same fate, only more so, because Fenn's wrath increased with each visit.

Kennedy, of course, heard nothing of this, or he might perhaps have thought better of Fenn. As for the junior dayroom, it was obliged to work off its emotion by jeering Jimmy Silver from the safety of the touchline when the head of Blackburn's was refereeing in a match between the juniors of his house and those of Kay's. Blackburn's happened to win by four goals and eight tries, a result which the patriotic Kay fag attributed solely to favouritism on the part of the referee.

"I like the kids in your house," said Jimmy to Kennedy, after the match, when telling the latter of the incident; "there's no false idea of politeness about them. If they don't like your decisions they say so in a shrill treble."

"Little beasts," said Kennedy. "I wish I knew who they were. It's hopeless to try and spot them, of course."

CHAPTER XI.

THE SENIOR DAYROOM OPENS FIRE.

CURIOUSLY enough, it was shortly after this that the junior dayroom ceased almost entirely to trouble the head of the house. Not that they turned over new leaves, and modelled their conduct on that of the hero of the Sunday school story. They were still disorderly, but in a lesser degree; and ragging became a matter of private enterprise among the fags instead of being, as it had threatened to be, an organised revolt against the new head. When a Kay's fag rioted now, he did so with the air of one endeavouring to amuse himself, not as if he were carrying on a sacred war against the oppressor.

Kennedy's difficulties were considerably diminished by this change. A head of a house expects the juniors of his house to rag. It is what they are put into the world to do, and there is no difficulty in keeping the thing within decent limits. A revolution is another case altogether. Kennedy was grateful for the change, for it gave him more time to keep an eye on the other members of the house, but he had no idea what had brought it about. As a matter of fact he had Billy Silver to thank for it. The chief organiser of the movement against Kennedy in the junior dayroom had been the red-haired Wren, who preached war to his fellow fags, partly because he loved to create a disturbance, and partly because Walton, who hated Kennedy, had told him to. Between Wren and Billy Silver a feud had existed since their first meeting. The unsatisfactory conclusion to their encounter in camp had given another lease of life to the feud, and Billy had come back to Kay's with the fixed intention of smiting his auburn-haired foe hip and thigh at the earliest opportunity. Wren's attitude with respect to Kennedy gave him a decent excuse. He had no particular regard for Kennedy. The fact that he was a friend of his brother's was no recommendation. There existed between the two Silvers that feeling which generally exists between an elder and a much younger brother at the same school. Each thought the other a bit of an idiot, and though equal to tolerating him personally, was hanged if he was going to do the same by his friends. In Billy's circle of acquaintances Jimmy's friends were looked upon with cold suspicion as officious meddlers who would give them lines if they found them out of bounds. The aristocrats with whom Jimmy foregathered barely recognised the existence of Billy's companions. Kennedy's claim to Billy's good offices rested on the fact that they both objected to Wren.

So that, when Wren lifted up his voice in the junior dayroom, and exhorted the fags to go and make a row in the passage outside Kennedy's study, and—from a safe distance, and having previously ensured a means of rapid escape—to fling boots at his door, Billy damped the popular enthusiasm which had been excited by the proposal by kicking Wren with some violence, and begging him not to be an ass.

Whereupon they resumed their battle at the point at which it had been interrupted at camp. And when, some five minutes later, Billy, from his seat on his adversary's chest, offered to go through the same performance with anybody else who wished, the junior dayroom came to the conclusion that his feelings with regard to the new head of the house, however foolish and unpatriotic, had better be respected. And the revolution of the fags had fizzled out from that moment.

In the senior dayroom, however, the flag of battle was still unfurled. It was so obvious that Kennedy had been put into the house as a reformer, and the seniors of Kay's had such an objection to being reformed, that trouble was only to be expected. It was the custom in most houses for the head of the house, by right of that position, to be also captain of football. The senior dayroom was aggrieved at Kennedy's taking this post from Fenn. Fenn was in his second year in the school fifteen, and he was the three-quarter who scored most frequently for Eckleton, whereas Kennedy, though practically a certainty for one of the six vacant places in the school scrum, was at present entitled to wear only a second fifteen cap. The claims of Fenn to be captain of Kay's football were strong. Kennedy had begged him to continue in that position more than once. Fenn's persistent refusal had helped to increase the coolness between them, and it had also made things more difficult for Kennedy in the house.

It was on the Monday of the third week of term that Kennedy, at Jimmy Silver's request, arranged a "friendly" between Kay's and Blackburn's. There could be no doubt as to which was the better team (for Blackburn's had been runners up for the Cup the season before), but the better one's opponents the better the practice. Kennedy wrote out the list and fixed it on the notice board. The match was to be played on the following afternoon.

A football team must generally be made up of the biggest men at the captain's disposal, so it happened that Walton, Perry, Callingham, and the other leaders of dissension in Kay's, all figured on the list. The consequence was that the list came in for a good deal of comment in the senior dayroom. There were games every Saturday and Wednesday, and it annoyed Walton and friends that they should have to turn out on an afternoon that was not a half holiday. It was trouble enough playing football on the days when it was compulsory. As for patriotism, no member of the house even pretended to care whether Kay's put a good team into the field or not. The senior dayroom sat talking over the matter till lights-out. When Kennedy came down next morning he found his list scribbled over with blue pencil, while across it in bold letters ran the single word.

ROT.

He went to his study, wrote out a fresh copy, and pinned it up in place of the old one. He had been early in coming down that morning, and the majority of the Kayites had not seen the defaced notice. The match was fixed for half-past four. At four a thin rain was falling. The weather had been bad for some days, but on this particular afternoon it reached the limit. In addition to being wet, it was also cold, and Kennedy, as he walked over to the grounds, felt that he would be glad when the game was over. He hoped that Blackburn's would be punctual, and congratulated himself on his foresight in securing Mr. Blackburn as referee. Some of the staff, when they consented to hold the whistle in a scratch game, invariably kept the teams waiting on the field for half an hour before turning up. Mr. Blackburn, on the other hand, was always punctual. He came out of his house just as Kennedy turned in at the school gates.

"Well, Kennedy," he said from the depths of his ulster, the collar of which he had turned up over his ears with a prudence which Kennedy, having come out with only a blazer on over his football clothes, distinctly envied, "I hope your men are not going to be late. I don't think I ever saw a worse day for football. How long were you thinking of playing? Two twenty-fives would be enough for a day like this, I think."

Kennedy consulted with Jimmy Silver, who came up at this moment, and they agreed without argument that twenty-five minutes each way would be the very thing.

"Where are your men?" asked Jimmy. "I've got all our chaps out here, bar Challis, who'll be out in a few minutes. I left him almost changed."

Challis appeared a little later, and joined the rest of Blackburn's team, who were putting in the time and trying to keep warm by running and passing and dropping desultory goals. But, with the exception of Fenn, who stood brooding by himself in the centre of the field, wrapped to the eyes in a huge overcoat, and two other house prefects of Kay's, who strolled up and down looking as if they wished they were in their studies, there was no sign of the missing team.

"I can't make it out," said Kennedy.

"You're sure you put up the right time?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Yes, quite."

It certainly could not be said that Kay's had had any room for doubt as to the time of the match, for it had appeared in large figures on both notices.

A quarter to five sounded from the college clock.

"We must begin soon," said Mr. Blackburn, "or there will not be light enough even for two twenty-fives."

Kennedy felt wretched. Apart from the fact that he was frozen to an icicle and drenched by the rain, he felt responsible for his team, and he could see that Blackburn's men were growing irritated at the delay, though they did their best to conceal it.

"Can't we lend them some subs?" suggested Challis, hopefully.

"All right—if you can raise eleven subs," said Silver. "They've only got four men on the field at present."

Challis subsided.

"Look here," said Kennedy, "I'm going back to the house to see what's up. I'll be back as soon as I can. They must have mistaken the time or something after all."

He rushed back to the house and flung open the door of the senior dayroom. It was empty.

Kennedy had expected to find his missing men huddled in a semicircle round the fire, waiting for some one to come and tell them that Blackburn's had taken the field, and that they could come out now without any fear of having to wait in the rain for the match to begin. This, he thought, would have been the unselfish policy of Kay's senior dayroom.

But to find nobody was extraordinary.

The thought occurred to him that the team might be changing in their dormitories. He ran upstairs. But all the dormitories were locked, as he might have known they would have been. Coming downstairs again he met his fag, Spencer.

Spencer replied to his inquiry that he had only just come in. He did not know where the team had got to. No, he had not seen any of them.

"WE MUST BEGIN SOON, OR THERE WILL NOT BE LIGHT ENOUGH EVEN FOR TWO TWENTY-FIVES!"

"Oh, yes, though," he added, as an afterthought, "I met Walton just now. He looked as if he was going down town."

Walton had once licked Spencer, and that vindictive youth thought that this might be a chance of getting back at him.

"Oh," said Kennedy, quietly, "Walton? Did you? Thanks."

Spencer was disappointed at his lack of excitement. His news did not seem to interest him.

Kennedy went back to the football field to inform Jimmy Silver of the result of his investigations.

CHAPTER XII.

KENNEDY INTERVIEWS WALTON.

"I'M very sorry," he said, when he rejoined the shivering group, "but I'm afraid we shall have to call this match off. There seems to have been a mistake. None of my team are anywhere about. I'm awfully sorry, sir," he added, to Mr. Blackburn, "to have given you all this trouble for nothing."

"Not at all, Kennedy. We must try another day."

Mr. Blackburn suspected that something untoward had happened in Kay's to cause this sudden defection of the first fifteen of the house. He knew that Kennedy was having a hard time in his new position, and he did not wish to add to his discomfort by calling for an explanation before an audience. It could not be pleasant for Kennedy to feel that his enemies had scored off him. It was best to preserve a discreet silence with regard to the whole affair, and leave him to settle it for himself.

Jimmy Silver was more curious. He took Kennedy off to tea in his study, sat him down in the best chair in front of the fire, and proceeded to urge him to confess everything.

"Now, then, what's it all about?" he asked, briskly, spearing a muffin on the fork and beginning to toast.

"It's no good asking me," said Kennedy. "I suppose it's a put-up job to make me look a fool. I ought to have known something of this kind would happen when I saw what they did to my first notice."

"What was that?"

Kennedy explained.

"This is getting thrilling," said Jimmy. "Just pass that plate. Thanks. What are you going to do about it?"

"I don't know. What would you do?"

"My dear chap, I'd first find out who was at the bottom of it there's bound to be one man who started the whole thing and I'd make it my aim in life to give him the warmest ten minutes he'd ever had."

"That sounds all right. But how would you set about it?"

"Why, touch him up, of course. What else would you do? Before the whole house, too."

"Supposing he wouldn't be touched up?"

"Wouldn't *be*! He'd have to."

"You don't know Kay's, Jimmy. You're thinking what you'd do if this had happened in Blackburn's. The two things aren't the same Here the man would probably take it like a lamb. The feeling of the house would be against him. He'd find nobody to back him up. That's because Blackburn's is a decent house instead of being a sink like Kay's. If I tried the touching-up before the whole house game with our chaps, the man would probably reply by going for me, assisted by the whole strength of the company."

"Well, dash it all then, all you've got to do is to call a prefects' meeting, and he'll get ten times worse beans from them than he'd have got from you. It's simple."

Kennedy stared into the fire pensively.

"I don't know," he said. "I bar that prefects' meeting business. It always seems rather feeble to me lugging in a lot of chaps to help settle some one you can't manage yourself. I want to carry this job through on my own."

"Then you'd better scrap with the man."

"I think I will."

Silver stared.

"Don't be an ass," he said. "I was only rotting. You can't go fighting all over the shop as if you were a fag. You'd lose your prefect's cap if it came out."

"I could wear my topper," said Kennedy, with a grin. "You see," he added, "I've not much choice. I *must* do something. If I took no notice of this business there'd be no holding the house. I should be ragged to death. It's no good talking about it. Personally, I should prefer touching the chap up to fighting him, and I shall try it on. But he's not likely to meet me half way. And if he doesn't there'll be an interesting turn-up, and you shall hold the watch. I'll send a kid round to fetch you when things look like starting. I must go now to interview my missing men. So long. Mind you slip round directly I send for you."

"Wait a second. Don't be in such a beastly hurry. Who's the chap you're going to fight?"

"I don't know yet. Walton, I should think But I don't know."

"Walton! By Jove, it'll be worth seeing, anyhow, if we *are* both sacked for it when the Old Man finds out."

Kennedy returned to his study and changed his football boots for a pair of gymnasium shoes. For the job he had in hand it was necessary that he should move quickly, and football boots are a nuisance on a board floor. When he had changed, he called Spencer.

"Go down to the senior dayroom," he said, "and tell MacPherson I want to see him."

MacPherson was a long, weak-looking youth. He had been put down to play for the house that day, and had not appeared.

"MacPherson!" said the fag, in a tone of astonishment, "not Walton?"

"TIME!" SAID JIMMY SILVER.

He had been looking forward to the meeting between Kennedy and his ancient foe, and to have a miserable being like MacPherson offered as a substitute disgusted him.

"If you have no objection," said Kennedy, politely. "I may want you to fetch Walton later on."

Spencer vanished, hopeful once more.

"Come in, MacPherson," said Kennedy, on the arrival of the long one; "shut the door."

Macpherson did so, feeling as if he were paying a visit to the dentist. As long as there had been others with him in this affair he had looked on it as a splendid idea. But to be singled out like this was quite a different thing.

"Now," said Kennedy, "why weren't you on the field this afternoon?"

"I—er—I was kept in."

"How long?"

"Oh—er—till about five."

"What do you call about five?"

"About twenty-five to," he replied, despondently.

"Now look here," said Kennedy, briskly, "I'm just going to explain to you exactly how I stand in this business, so you'd better attend.

I didn't ask to be made head of this sewage depôt. If I could have had any choice, I wouldn't have touched a Kayite with a barge-pole. But since I *am* head, I'm going to be it, and the sooner you and your senior day-room crew realise it the better. This sort of thing isn't going on. I want to know now who it was put up this job. You wouldn't have the cheek to start a thing like this yourself. Who was it?"

"Well er——"

"You'd better say, and be quick, too. I can't wait. Whoever it was, I sha'n't tell him you told me. And I sha'n't tell Kay. So now you can go ahead. Who was it?"

"Well -er—Walton."

"I thought so. Now you can get out. If you see Spencer, send him here."

Spencer, curiously enough, was just outside the door. So close to it, indeed, that he almost tumbled in when MacPherson opened it.

"Go and fetch Walton," said Kennedy.

Spencer dashed off delightedly, and in a couple of minutes Walton appeared. He walked in with an air of subdued defiance, and slammed the door.

"Don't bang the door like that," said Kennedy. "Why didn't you turn out to-day?"

"I was kept in."

"Couldn't you get out in time to play?"

"No."

"When did you get out?"

"Six."

"Not before?"

"I said six."

"Then how did you manage to go down town —without leave, by the way, but that's a detail—at half-past five?"

"All right," said Walton; "better call me a liar."

"Good suggestion," said Kennedy, cheerfully; "I will."

"It's all very well," said Walton. "You know jolly well you can say anything you like. I can't do anything to you. You'd have me up before the prefects."

"Not a bit of it. This is a private affair between ourselves. I'm not going to drag the prefects into it. You seem to want to make this house worse than it is. I want to make it more or less decent. We can't both have what we want."

There was a pause.

"When would it be convenient for you to be touched up before the whole house?" inquired Kennedy, pleasantly.

"What?"

"Well, you see, it seems the only thing. I must take it out of some one for this house match business, and you started it. Will to-night suit you, after supper?"

"You'll get it hot if you try to touch me."

"We'll see."

"You'd funk taking me on in a scrap," said Walton.

"Would I? As a matter of fact, a scrap would suit me just as well. Better. Are you ready now?"

"Quite, thanks," sneered Walton. "I've knocked you out before, and I'll do it again."

"Oh, then it was you that night at camp? I thought so. I spotted your style. Hitting a chap when he wasn't ready, you know, and so on. Now, if you'll wait a minute, I'll send across to Blackburn's for Silver. I told him I should probably want him as a time-keeper to-night."

"What do you want with Silver? Why won't Perry do?"

"Thanks, I'm afraid Perry's time-keeping wouldn't be impartial enough. Silver, I think, if you don't mind."

Spencer was summoned once more, and despatched to Blackburn's. He returned with Jimmy.

"Come in, Jimmy," said Kennedy. "Run away, Spencer. Walton and I are just going to settle a point of order which has arisen, Jimmy. Will you hold the watch? We ought just to have time before tea."

"Where?" asked Silver.

"My dormitory would be the best place. We can move the beds. I'll go and get the keys."

Kennedy's dormitory was the largest in the house. After the beds had been moved back there was a space in the middle of fifteen feet one way, and twelve the other—not a large ring, but large enough for two fighters who meant business.

Walton took off his coat, waistcoat, and shirt. Kennedy, who was still in football clothes, removed his blazer.

"Half a second," said Jimmy Silver—"what length rounds?"

"Two minutes?" said Kennedy to Walton.

"All right," growled Walton.

"Two minutes, then, and half a minute in between."

"Are you both ready?" asked Jimmy, from his seat on the chest of drawers.

Kennedy and Walton advanced into the middle of the impromptu ring.

There was dead silence for a moment.

"Time!" said Jimmy Silver.

(To be continued.)

THE CYCLING CORNER.

HUNTING ON A CYCLE.

By Archibald Williams.

THE more fortunate of us who live in the country are sometimes able to "lend a hand" in the pursuit of sly Reynard, it may be on horseback, or it may be on foot, or—a sort of compromise—on a cycle. It would, of course, be rank heresy to say that the first method is not the ideal one, as containing the strong spice of danger at the fences which the pedestrian cannot get much taste of, and from which the cyclist is utterly debarred. Without doubt the wheelman-hunter is severely handicapped in the chase, and his pleasure very largely depends on the amount of consideration shown by "the thief of the world" in picking out a course pretty near the roads. If the fox prefers to make a point across the open the cyclist must remain content with the hounds' music, and a distant view of coats more or less pink, and when the death occurs he won't be much the wiser.

Yet I have managed some very pretty hunting on my steel and rubber steed, and on one occasion certainly deserved the thanks of "the field." It was like this. Mr. Fox had fairly out-distanced the hounds—as they had out-distanced me. Looking over a hedge I happened to see him paddling along a ditch, from which he broke for some gorse. When the hounds came up the water fairly checked them, so after letting them have a proper chance to win the game off their own bat, I gave the huntsman the tip, and Reynard was soon awakened from his little nap in the gorse, to make his last run for life.

As a rule cyclists don't help much, and, in the opinion of equestrians, do get in the way a good deal. I have a vivid recollection of a rather stout lady toiling down a very narrow lane on her tricycle, with which, in the keenness born of the chase, she effectively blocked the way for the Master and all his men. Had it been a motor-car she could scarcely have held the day's sport more completely in the hollow of her hand. There was a delightful you-pass-only-over-my-body touch in the situation for a good three hundred yards. By the bye, motors are also taking a part in the noble sport, not merely as vehicles which bear the riders to the meet, but as a swifter edition of the cycle. It hasn't yet been decided whether they spoil the scent; but they are debarred from some meets where cyclists are tolerated. Mechanism looms so largely in modern life that we may nevertheless live to see the time when hedge-leaping Panhards—omnibus type for families—will throw in the top speed on the trail of a 4 h.p. De Dion fox, driven by a peculiarly odorous spirit, and guided by electric rays. But this won't happen till all foxes of the present type have been scared out of the country.

After such a terrible suggestion, I will pass to a branch of hunting reserved for the wheel alone; viz.,

The Cycle Paperchase.

Perhaps you haven't yet had experience of this pastime—or should I call it sport? If properly conducted it is capital fun, given decent weather and roads to which the stone-scatterer has not set his hand too freely. Last winter, after having often heard of this method of passing an afternoon, I organised a paperchase.

The "scent" was confetti, such as a

certain class of people love to lavish on the newly-married. Six penn'orth of it sufficed to mark out a ten-mile course, and half that quantity would have done the business, since, on the straight stretches, where deviation was impossible, a patch here and there might have been substituted for the continuous trail. One great advantage of confetti is that

TWO HARES CAN CARRY ALL THEY NEED IN THEIR POCKETS.

There had been no rain for a few days, and the roads were quite free of mud and puddles, though a trifle soft in places. Two hares were chosen who knew the country thoroughly, so that the hounds should have a sporting run for their money. The district—South Buckinghamshire—abounds in bye-roads, flanked by high hedges, and of a twisty nature, which, except for a very small part of the course, kept pursuers and pursued invisible to each other at a distance of a hundred yards or so.

The field was divided into a slow and a fast brigade, according to the individual's riding powers. The hares had five minutes' law, and then off went the "slows," followed a few minutes later by the "fasts" Meanwhile the hounds had been industriously sowing confetti on a few false scents, and pedalling as hard as they could to make up lost time. After a few miles a halt was called at a spot favourable for commanding the approach, and four ears were strained to catch the first tinkle of a cycle bell or the human voice raised to an excited pitch. As soon as cries of "This way," "Here you are," became audible, off went the hares again, fearful that the swiftest hound's front wheel might appear round the corner too close to be pleasant. Evidently a false scent must be laid again; so laid it was—

ALONG THE ROAD MOST LIKELY TO BE TAKEN

—and the hares vanished modestly down a side track. The trick was worked all right, and the hounds blundered in full cry towards the end of things; and by the time the error had been discovered the hares were a mile "up."

But now confetti began to grow scarce, and a rigid economy needful. Very possibly this led the hounds into further difficulty; at any rate, the quarry had a good ten minutes' rest at the distant end of an open common, where they decided to let the hounds have a fair view, and then put for home, all out. Alas! for human calculations! The hounds had more up their sleeve than they were credited with, and the hares, after a game struggle, succumbed on a short, steep hill, within a mile of safety.

A second paperchase ended very flatly, as the hounds failed to find the scent, and arrived by a short cut only in time to anticipate a search party being dispatched with lamps and other first-aid for the uninjured. The difficulty probably arose from the fact that the hares took turns at laying scent, and at one place, each thinking the other was scattering, neither laid any. The moral, therefore, seems to be that the hares should have a complete understanding on this point, especially if they ride abreast. The scent should be laid on the windward side of a road across which a strong wind blows, so that it may be sheltered as much as possible. Repeated dismounts to search the ditches and hedgerows for tiny scraps of paper that have been whirled away by the wind soon become tiresome.

All participants in a cycle paperchase should arrive at the meet with

THEIR CYCLES IN GOOD ORDER

Tyres on the point of bursting or leaking, loose nuts, shaky pedals, &c., cause vexatious delays, which are rather hard on the riders not responsible for them. Puncture repairing outfits should be carried, as the evening soon overtakes the riders, and walking home in darkness makes a sad end to a hunt. If possible, the hares should be selected a few days before the chase, and they should go over the course, in order to avoid bad roads, where stones and ruts might give trouble.

As regards the starting allowance.

THIRTY SECONDS FOR EVERY MILE INTENDED

is about a fair average, to leave a margin for false scents, &c., if the course has not already been picked, and half that amount if it has. In the event of a hare getting "punctured," the other should help him to make a quick mend; or, if time does not permit, continue his way alone. It is not a bad plan, however, to arrange that such a puncture holds up the field till the hares are sound again, the fresh start being proportioned to the distance still to be traversed.

When the Hounds are "Mixed,"

i.e., when your sisters and lady friends join in the fun, the hares should be "mixed" also. In this case the hounds should stick together, as the swift male rider might make the pace too hot for his gentler companions, and the hares be driven too hard. The chase should not degenerate into a mere race, with its possible evil effects on untrained riders.

If Scent runs out,

either drop some article that has been carried for the purpose, or a handful of specially coloured scent, and take the nearest road home.

A novel form of treasure-hunting was inaugurated by the proprietors of *Cycling* in the autumn. The treasure was a "Royal Enfield" bicycle; and to win it the competitors were required to track out a route over which a photographer had already travelled to make pictures of parts of the road. Nineteen of these were published weekly, three at a time. From the clues thus furnished the route had to be traced; and on October 1st a *Cycling* representative waited at "Ye Old Thatched House Hotel," Epping, to receive coupons with the identity of the clues filled in; the cyclist who first after 6 p.m. handed in a correct coupon receiving the prize.

The winner deserved his success, since he used his common sense in a manner that suggests Sherlock Holmes. One clue puzzled him particularly on account of an extra rail existing on a fence that appeared in the photograph. He looked to see if the nails were new. They were; so the mystery vanished!

Cycling accessories are so numerous that when one is in doubt as to the nature of a present to be bestowed on a relation or friend one can do worse than to look over the catalogues of Messrs. Gamage. Benetfink, Piggott, The City Sale and Exchange, and other athletic outfitters, with particular regard to the cycle department. Your sister's pedals have worn out; a new pair can be got for 5s. upwards, and will prove a very useful gift. Or you may like to give her a network carrier for fixing to her handlebars when she goes shopping. This means an expenditure of about 8s. The same sum will purchase a really good bell or cyclometer. At this time of the year an acetylene lamp is a peculiarly suitable thing wherewith to rejoice a friend's heart; but here you must be prepared for an outlay of at least 6s. if you want a good article, while 10s. will cover a really first-rate illuminator. By giving such a lamp to a member of the family you will have it at command for your own use; and the same remark will apply to a good-sized foot-pump, which can be bought with a 21-inch barrel, 1 1-8 inches in diameter, for 5s. An effective pump of this kind

Is Invaluable in the Cycle Room,

as it not only enables you to inflate a tyre in a very few strokes, but also does away with the necessity for removing pumps from the machines to which they respectively belong, and on which they very probably may not be replaced. I have in my possession a foot-pump that cost only 1s. 6d., and it is good value for the money, but will, of course, be worn out in a short time, as compared with the life of a pump that costs a crown.

Of less universal utility is a comfortable saddle, which begins at 7s. 6d. and may rise to 15s. or more. But a cleaning outfit, such as Gamage's "Clean-all" (price 3s. 6d.), will, like Mercy, bless him that gives as well as him that takes—if it, too, be kept in the family. I need not lengthen the list, as a perusal of the catalogues referred to will tell the whole story. For the benefit of those who do not know them, I append addresses:—Messrs. A. W. Gamage and Co., High Holborn, London, E.C.; Messrs. Benetfink and Co., 89 Cheapside, London, E.C.; Messrs. John Piggott, Ltd., 117 Cheapside; The City Sale and Exchange, 90 Fleet Street, E.C.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. Jordan.—Tangent spokes are certainly preferable to direct, as being both stronger and more easily replaced. I don't think that any good makers fit direct spokes nowadays.

"Headlight."—I generally put fresh carbide in my lamp every time I use it; just enough to last out the journey in prospect, if it be a short one. If you wish to economise you must remove undissolved carbide from the holder immediately after returning home, for, if left in, it also will probably be affected by the damp.

Sybil Ward.—There is no advantage in having the gear-case open at the rear end. You certainly can get at the chain more easily to clean it if there be such an opening; but if it didn't exist why should mud, &c., accumulate on the chain at all? Questions should be sent in by the 4th of the month to be sure of answers being given in the following issue.

THE POWER OF THE PEN.

By STUART WISHING.

Sketches by ALFRED PEARSE.

WE had always had a sort of hankering after journalism, you know—not the gassy sort of stuff that people write after visiting the heroes of the football field or the racing track, but real, imaginative literature. Any fool can go and interview a fellow, and note down the drawing-room furniture on his shirt-cuff—if he happens to have one—or extract the information that C. B. Fry drinks tea in preference to coffee, or *vice versâ*—but it takes a keen chap to think out yarns and verses, and an industrious chap to write them down.

"Let's start a paper," said my chum Dickie, one day.

"A paper?"

"Yes: a regular Journal—not like the beastly official rag the school brings out; but a jolly, bright, wholesome—all new papers say they're wholesome—snappy chronicle. It would be great fun."

"It would," I said, thoughtfully. "But how could we get it printed?"

"Couldn't afford printing; and it would be a lot of sweat writing out every copy."

"What could we do then?"

"Ever heard of a hektograph? No? What a kid you are still, Tommy. Here—don't scrap! I apologise. All right, I'll explain. It's one of those jelly machines, you know—or don't know. You melt up the jelly, and print heaps of copies off it. It's a jelly—I mean jolly—good wheeze, I can tell you."

Well, the long and short of it was that we arranged to start a paper. We two were to be the joint editors, contributors, printers, publishers, and newspaper boys. It struck us that it would be a jolly good idea to bring out a daily gazette sort of business; but afterwards, when we found out what a nuisance it was to write all the rot, we decided that an issue once a term would be

quite enough. The Man in the Street—to use a newspaper phrase—has simply no idea what a lot of work goes to bring out a paper—especially when you have to do everything yourself.

We had to settle on a good name. This was changed about five times a day until we actually went to press, and then it finally appeared as *The Termly Thunderer*. I think Thunderer is a good sort of sounding name, and Termly expressed the regular appearance—at least, it was meant to. Stretton said it should have been "Terminal," but we argued from the words Daily, Weekly, Monthly, and so on, that it should be Termly—and I don't think Terminal would have looked half as well, do you?

We wrote a fair amount of copy for it before making any purchases. "Copy" is the technical name for the reading stuff: any chap who knows anything will understand that I don't mean copying it out.

Well, we wrote yards of copy. It was rather fun, and not much sweat, as we wrote most of it in school-time, or in prep. This brought about a few impots, of course, but we should have got those in any case; so it didn't matter so very much. Dickie was responsible for most of the prose part, as he is no good at rhymes. I wrote all the verses, and a lot of local notes—with little paragraphs about different chaps, you know—and then we got to work with the hektograph.

After incredible difficulties—this isn't the yarn of a traveller, but a plain statement of fact—we printed fifty copies of the *Thunderer*. The paper we used was bagged from the house cupboard. Our expenses were about six bob and our time. Our profits—as we charged 3d. a number—would come (we reckoned) to six and sixpence. Not a great sum, but still, nowadays it seems hard not to *drop* money, let alone make it

We fixed on Saturday for the publication of our Journal, and posted a notice on our study door to the effect that "A New Journal, supplying a long-felt want, might be obtained within, on Saturday afternoon, at the modest price of 3d." We fixed on the afternoon because we are rather busy in the morning—keeping in the background as much as possible, to prevent masters and other coarse fish from providing for our leisure hours. Of course, fellows were awfully envious, and chaffed us no end about the new undertaking. We sheltered ourselves in mysterious silence, thereby hoping to stimulate the demand. Nobody got to know any of the real contents of the paper before it came out; and on the whole I think it was just as well.

On Saturday afternoon, directly dinner was over, we rushed to our study, sat down behind the table near our *Thunderer*, and waited for the eager crowd. The crowd came—a bit too eagerly, and we only saved our stock-in-trade by Dickie sitting on it, and myself repelling those who had no money. It was a busy ten minutes; but by the end of it we had sold every copy, and had in our possession half the weekly pocket money of most of our house.

We were complacently counting our spoil when there came an interruption. A large, ill-mannered youth, named Gordon, walked into our study with the *Thunderer* in his hand.

"I want to speak to you," he said.

"Come to congratulate us, or take some shares?" I asked, cheerfully. But he didn't respond in the spirit which I displayed.

"I've not come to congratulate you, or take any of your beastly shares. I've come to ask what you mean by putting this in about me?"

I scented trouble.

"Is it in the 'Local Paragraphs' or the Poetry column?" I asked.

"'Local Paragraphs,' you mongrel."

"Ah," I remarked. "We tried to make the local paragraphs snappy and interesting. What does it say?"

"This." He spluttered with rage. "'We hear, on good authority, that C. J. G.rd.n'—of course, we'd left the vowels out: it's an old trick—'has announced his intention of dyeing his hair red and blue on alternate days. We trust this report will be confirmed, as his present hirsute'—(*my* word)—'furniture is the reverse of pleasing to the artistic eye.' What do you say to that?"

"Isn't it true?" asked Dickie, anxiously. "I *hope* it's going to be red and blue. They're my favourite colours."

"You—you swine!" (He uses rather vulgar words, you know, but I could make excuses.) "I'll pay you out for this."

"We'll correct it in our next issue," I assured him. "We'll say you're going to dye it green and yellow, if you like. Can we do more?"

Apparently we couldn't, for he left our study abruptly.

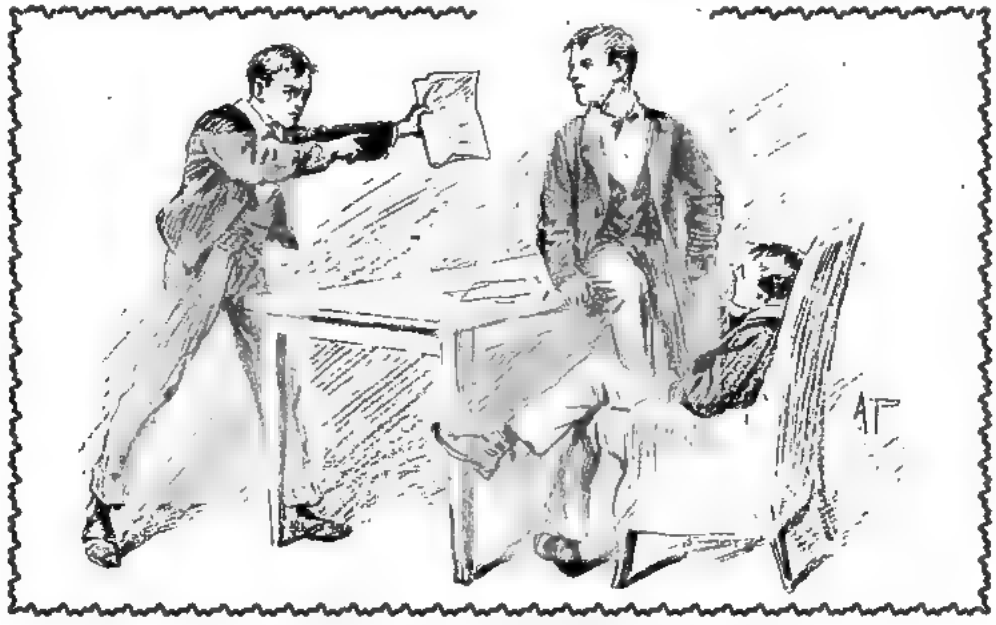
"Cheery chap," said Dickie, thoughtfully. "I thought he wouldn't mind a little thing like that;—but you never can tell."

"No," I said, "I don't think he's got much to complain about. Hallo! Come in!"

"Meaning the *Thunderer*, I suppose. It strikes me we'll have to publish an index and vocabulary to our organ. Read out the offending passage. Is it Poetry or Local——"

"It's meant to be poetry," he said. "I daresay you think a lot of it; but, in my opinion, it's the worst bilge I've ever seen."

"Perhaps you're prejudiced, or blinded



"I'VE COME TO ASK WHAT YOU MEAN BY PUTTING THIS IN ABOUT ME?"

I had heard another knock—a loud, aggressive sort of knock, you know; and now there advanced into our study a fellow named Wiltshire. He's a biggish chap—about our size, and he looked rather sick. I greeted him in a hearty fashion, though I guessed the purpose of the visit.

"Come to——" I began.

"No, I haven't," he snapped. "I want to know the meaning of this."

"You chaps want a great deal of help in your home work to-day," said Dickie wearily. "We've had one ignoramus in already."

"Let *me* help you, my boy," I said. "Come to me if you want information. I cannot allow you to profit by the industry of your class-mates." (That was a crib from old Sellars' style, of course.)

"I don't want any of your confounded cheek, young Calmour. I've had enough of that already. What do you mean by sticking this about me in your beastly rag?"

by passion," Dickie suggested mildly. "Cool down a bit, and let's hear the worst. We've written it—or rather Tommy has—and can face it a second time."

So he read the following:—

Ode to W.ltsh.re.

Oh, Being, strange and fearful,
In mind and body weak,
I wonder much why Nature
Gave vent to such a freak!

In vain do kindly masters,
In vain do bigger boys,
Ply daily cane or willow;
You only make a noise.

The fishes in the water,
The birds upon the tree,
The cows about the meadows
Are wiser far than thee.

"*You* call that rot poetry, I suppose? I call it cheek; and I'll get even with you!"

"How?" I asked amiably. "You

couldn't fight either of us—let alone the two together. The best thing to do is to bear the criticisms of the Press with calmness."

"I'll make you repent it," he grunted vindictively. "I can get heaps of chaps to help." Then he retreated from the room.

His parting words gave us food for thought.

"It won't be all jam," said Dickie, "if he leads a mob this way. We'll have all our work cut out."

"M'yes," I replied.

So we bustled about and got ready for the expected attack. All the printing apparatus, money, &c., we locked away in our grub boxes. Then we laid in a good stock of water—not to drink, of course—in big jugs, and waited.

Presently we heard steps coming along the passage. Then somebody stopped outside our door and hailed us.

"Flag of truce," he said. "Is it Pax while I come in?"

"You can talk from outside," I replied "Well . . . will you surrender?"

"What for?" said Dickie.

"For writing all that rot about different chaps."

"*Do* you take us for asses?" I said, sarcastically

"You'd better give in. It'll pay you in the long run," was the answer.

"Just you take a long run yourself," I shouted, "or we'll hurry you up."

The unknown departed hastily, and a few moments later the grand attack began. Luckily, our door is—or rather was—a good strong one, and resisted the siege bravely. We found it fairly easy to keep them out by sticking the back of a chair under the door-handle, and simply holding it there. It acts as a splendid lever, you know; and if that had been all the business, they'd never have got in. But they were 'cuter than we supposed.

"Hold the door," Dickie shouted suddenly, and retreated. I held the door firmly—it wasn't much to do, really—and looked round. I saw Dickie up at the window—which was open—industriously belabouring a head and shoulders with a hockey stick. The beggars had placed a short ladder outside and were climbing up!

Fortunately, Dickie is strong of arm. His stick, too, proved harder than our enemies' skins, and they retreated. He is a good shot also, and they were unlucky enough to absorb a jug full of water before they got to cover. They simply sizzled with rage: it was excellent sport.

"Here, take a turn at the door, Dickie," I said. "*I* want to do a little of the week's washing now."

He obeyed; and I approached the window. It was lucky I didn't get there sooner. I had only got half way across the room when—Smash! went a pane of glass, and a potato whizzed past my head. Then another and another. The beggars had raided the gardener's shed—it was Wiltshire's idea we found out after.

Those potatoes came banging and crashing through, doing no end of harm to the treasured ornaments and photographs on our mantelpiece, leaving wet marks where they smashed against the wall, and touching *us* up pretty considerably when they came *our* way. One got Dickie in the neck, and another hit me in the ear—I tell you I felt deaf for days after, for a potato is no trifle when flung hard by an enraged youth like Wiltshire. Occasionally the fire slackened, but whenever we showed ourselves near the window it began again with increased vigour. The place seemed to be simply full of potatoes.

"This is a bit thick," said Dickie, surveying the havoc with a troubled eye. "What we've made on the old *Thunderer* won't anything like pay for that glass. I'm getting tired of it."

"Confound the beastly rag," I said. "What can we do, Dickie?"

"Blessed if I know. Better sit tight, I suppose."

I couldn't offer a better suggestion, so we sat tight; and I expect we should have been sitting there still if matters hadn't moved rather more quickly than we expected.

You see, the besiegers at the door had kept up their hammering and shoving very heartily the whole time. Now, as ill-luck would have it, two catastrophes occurred. If they had happened at different times we could have dealt with them effectually; but, coming together, well—it was rather beyond our strength—*ultra vires*, as the Latin puts it. The potato lot had advanced up the ladder. They reached the top. One fellow threw open the window and jumped in. I started up to drive him back—when, all of a sudden, the door-handle gave way. It wasn't its fault, poor thing! It had stood the strain bravely for some time, and had put up with a good deal. The

result was that one body irrupted through the door, and a second through the window. We had a fairly busy time of it for a few minutes, when another interruption occurred.

This time it was the house-porter; and I'm bound to say that Dickie and I were rather glad of his appearance.

"The House-Master wishes to see Master Calmour and Master Vaughan at once."

I SAW DICKIE BELABOURING A HEAD AND SHOULDERS WITH A HOCKEY STICK.

That calmed the crowd, because an invitation of that sort usually means a caning. They retired, hooting lustily. Dickie and I brushed one another as speedily as we could, and then went into the old bird's study, wondering what on earth was up. We'd been pretty good for the last fortnight, and we didn't know of anything specially wrong in our careers. The old bird was sitting at his table, and in his hands he held—a copy of the *Thunderer*.

"I have called you in," he began, "because I understand you two are the—the editors of this paper."

The *Thunderer* looked very small and sorry for itself the way he held it. We admitted the "soft impeachment" as gently as possible.

"I have read it with interest, but am bound to say that I consider it a most discreditable production. You have not contented yourselves with lampooning your companions; you have also attacked your masters."

At this point we remembered a harmless little article of Dickie's on the advisability of masters being caned daily by heads of forms; and I am ready to acknowledge that we trembled.

"I must teach you that boys must not commit such impertinences. Possibly a good whipping will inspire you with better manners. . . . Now, Calmour!"

And he raised the cane in the air.

ROLF.

By BART KENNEDY.

With an Illustration by Helmer.

I.

ROLF had vowed eternal vengeance against Rollo. To the gods he had prayed for power to smite his foeman into the dust. Wodin, of the din and blood of war, and Thor, of the mighty hammer, he had invoked. Wild, intense Norseman, he longed for the power to gather in his hand all the forces that dwelt in earth, air, and sea—aye, and that dwelt in the heavens and the hells—to fuse them into one thunderbolt wherewith to slay—to slay Rollo.

And Rollo? What had Rollo done to Rolf? How had he aroused this fearful hatred?

If asked this question, Rolf could never have answered it. He knew that his father had hated Rollo's father long before he himself was born. Feuds had burned between the families through generations. He had inherited this hatred, even as the eagle inherits its talons and cruel, sweeping crush of wing. Bred amid the wildness of storms and crash of battles, he was indeed one to nurture such an inheritance.

He was tall and sinewy of frame. He moved with that litheness, and curious, abrupt ease of action that belong but to the born robber of sea or mountain. Strange to say, for a Norseman, his hair was black, his eyes were piercingly black, and he was sallow of face. His expression was cruelly fierce. He was dressed in skins, and his hair swept down his shoulders in one unkempt wave. A dagger, with long, naked blade, was stuck in his belt. His air was that of savage, destructive force. It seemed as if a man had leaped full-powered from the hurtle of furying elements—as if they had given birth to a human in the midst of their ravings

Such was Rolf.

II.

IT was a winter's day, and the sun shone with that pale, searching softness which belongs to its shinings in far Northern lands. Snow, snow! How it covered, how it caressed the deep valleys, the heaven-riving mountains!

And it fell gently—softly—slowly.

It lay upon all things. Hidden and calmed to sleep was the dash of the torrent and the roar of the river, as the snow mantled the prisoning ice. And the wind sang softly through the forest firs. And tiny birds chirped as they flew searchingly, seeking food for their little ones. And perhaps the wind whispered some strange and wondrous secret to the birds, for oft-times they gathered together on boughs and twittered to one another wonderingly. And some warbled a sweet answering refrain to the wind, that sang lower and lower, till at last, at eve, it died away in a whisper that trembled strangely the forest leaves.

And there came a calm all-stilling. All things it made restful. Even the wolves lay down in peace.

III.

"ROLLO! Rollo! Awake! awake! Rolf, with his men, is at thy gate! Arise! arise! I tell thee. Hear thou the mighty blows and crashes! He who would slay thee, who would slay us all, is upon us. Oh, how heavily thou dost sleep! The mead thou hast been drinking has numbed thee. Ah! Good! Here, here! Quick, quick! Buckle on thy sword—thy sword! Here is thine axe. Rolf is here! Bestir thyself. Summon thy vikings. Ho! Vikings! Vikings! Rise—rise from your drunken slumbers! Loose yon baying dogs! Rolf is upon us! Fight! fight!"

IV.

FAINT grey dawn was upon the land, and in the far East a star of a wondrous glory was arising. Steadily its rays stole across the fainter rays of dawn. And they grew brighter and brighter, and lo! mountains, forests, and all things were bathed in a soft glow—a glow that told of a great love.

And peace stilled all. And the star's rays fell, and fell, and illumed a strange scene in the great hall of a rude castle in wild Scandinavia.

This was the scene:—

Rude Norsemen were listening to a seer

[This story is reproduced, by permission, from Mr. Kennedy's book, "Darab's Wine Cup."]

NEVER MORE WOULD THEY BE FOES.

of white beard and calm eyes, who was pointing to the star and telling them a strange, mystic tale. Softened and wondering were their faces, and tears stood in their eyes. Weapons were in their hands. They had been about to slay one another, when suddenly this star of strange glory had appeared in the far East and stilled their fury. Entranced, they had watched it till at last there came the old seer to tell the story of its meaning.

He was telling them of a Child born in a manger in far-away Bethlehem—a Child who was to bring love and peace to all.

In the centre of the hall were two men. They were the leaders of the others. One had long, black, unkempt hair and a face most fierce, yet with a strangely softened expression dawning upon it; the other was frank of face, blue of eyes, and fair of hair. Their hands were joined, in friendly clasp, as they listened. Never more would they be foes.

And the star in the East grew brighter!

Cuckoo and Linnet.—R. E. Wright (Lancaster), during his holidays, found a cuckoo's egg in a linnet's nest, and asks if it is not an unusual occurrence. The linnet is not one of the birds commonly selected to be a foster-parent of the young cuckoo, but a number of instances are on record. According to a list drawn up by Mr. Bidwell, seven or eight years ago, out of 919 cuckoo eggs in his possession, 15 had been deposited in the nest of the linnet, as compared with 74 in the hedge-sparrow's nest, and 65 in that of the robin. This helps to an idea of the comparative rarity of the linnet's nest as the cuckoo's cradle.

Canary Bird.—The conditions stated by "Richard" (Glasgow) appear to indicate that his canary is troubled by insect pests. A strong infusion of quassia should be applied to the affected parts with a brush or soft rag, and the cage must be baked or boiled to get rid of the nuisance. Your bird is probably kept in too warm a place. A convenient form of quassia is supplied under the name of Essence of Quassia, by Mr. F. Tibbs, 30 Parkhurst Road, Holloway. Price 9d.

Publisher of Book.—E. R. Dutton (Greystones) wishes to know publisher and price of Johns' "Flowers of the Field." It is published by the S.P.C.K., Northumberland Avenue, London, and the price is 6s.

Weeds on Lawn.—H. Hoyes (Shepshed) asks for a reliable "killer" for the plantain plants that are spreading all over his father's bowling-green. The weed-killers that are extensively advertised in the gardening papers are, I believe, all very good when the weeds grow on paths, but it must be understood that the chemicals that will destroy weeds are also fatal to grass and other plants. In the case of a lawn, therefore, some other method is necessary, and the only one I know is the tedious and back-breaking one of pulling them up singly by hand.

Cat.—F. Long (Bath) is troubled about his cat, which has three sores on its back, and two on its face. The largest of these above the right eye, "looks as though caused by a blow or bite." It is really impossible without seeing the cat to judge whether these sores are due to disease (mange) or the results of a little difference of opinion with another cat. As F. L. speaks of his pet as "he," the latter appears to me the more probable cause; but I certainly think he ought to show the cat to a local "vet.," who would be able after examination to determine the exact nature of the sores and advise accordingly. It is very rarely that advice given by post or in a magazine as to trouble of this sort can be of any real value, because without inspection the adviser has so little to go upon that a mistake may easily be made. See the "vet."

Rabbits.—"Grub" (Rothesay) has a pair of Dutch rabbits, and wishes to know what is the best food for them. "I am feeding them at present on bran and tea-leaves, with lettuce as a change." I hope those rabbits are still alive when this answer appears, but it is scarcely to be expected that they will be. The bran is all right, and a little lettuce may be given occasionally—provided it is not running to seed, when it contains too much laudanum to be good. But tea-leaves are not food, and oats should take their place. In addition give swede or mangold, carrot or beet, as well as fresh hay, and for green meat give clover, dandelion, chicory, vetch, sow-thistle, and cauliflower-leaves. Clean water every day in summer, every second day in winter. Take care that the green food is quite free from surface moisture. Well-boiled potatoes may be given once a week.

Rats.—A. W. Bryant (Redland) has a pair of rats with a litter of six young ones, but the cage is only large enough for two. What should he do? and should he separate the parents? Also, is he risking anything by touching or looking at the young ones too much? He should certainly make, buy, or borrow another cage to accommodate the father, as he is not to be trusted with the young ones. The nursery should be opened as little as possible, as the mother will often destroy her young if handled, or even if frequently examined.

Guinea Pigs.—"Squealer" (Morlaix, France) asks for advice on the management of guinea pigs. Now, "management" includes the whole treatment of these pets, and that is far more than the "O. F." would allow me room for. Tell me the points upon which you want advice, and I will try to help you; but if you want a complete treatise I should advise you to get Cumberland's book on "The Guinea Pig" (Upcott Gill, 1s.). For food you will not go

far wrong if you treat them as rabbits. (See answers to "Grub" above).

Name of Plant.—The plant sent by Martin M. Sing (Robertsbridge) is the Orpine or Livelong (*Sedum telephium*), one of the Stonecrop family. Its name Livelong is due to the fact that it is difficult to kill it. The specimen arrived just too late to be included in the last "Corner," and remained in the

ORPINE, OR LIVELONG. (NATURAL SIZE.)

letter for a month. *It was still fresh*, and throwing out thin white roots from the base of each leaf. To preserve it for the herbarium, it is necessary to kill it by dipping it in boiling water.

Orchid - Hunting.—"Orchis" (Wandsworth) has made up his mind to give up the office and take up some outdoor occupation. He would like to become an orchid-hunter, and asks how to qualify for such a business. He ought, if possible, to get this information from one who has been through it. I have not; but I should imagine he must first find out if he is made for roughing it in tropical forests. Then he should have a fair general knowledge of botany, and an intimate acquaintance with the multitudinous species and varieties of orchids known to science, or he would be sending home a lot of rubbish that would not pay expenses. You should communicate with some of the famous firms, such as Veitch, of Chelsea, and Williams, of Highgate, who send out collectors; but I believe that a man has to show his fitness by work done on his own account before he gets such employment.

Swallow-tail Moth.—H. F. F. (Streatham) has reared from the egg some larvæ of this moth, feeding them on ivy. These larvæ hibernate when nearly full-fed, and finish their feeding in the spring. H. F. F. wants to know whether, by keeping them in a high temperature, he could not induce them to finish their larval stage without hibernating, as he can get plenty of ivy. You may make the attempt, but I believe it will fail, because in this case it is clear (ivy being an evergreen) that it is not the absence of food that induces hibernation, but some physiological necessity.

Water-Tortoise and Cat.—(1) J. L. McCance (W. Kensington) should not keep his water-tortoise in the garden with a pan of water to dip into. It should be kept indoors in a vessel of water containing an island or raft, so that it can get out occasionally. The feeding adopted is quite right, but you might vary its food by giving it small worms, pond snails, and water insects. (2) If your cat has eczema it requires more elaborate treatment than merely washing the affected parts with boracic acid—though this is good so far as it goes. Boracic-acid ointment is a more suitable form for this remedy. The trouble requires a different treatment according to the stage it has reached, but which I have not space to indicate in detail. You will find good advice, with the best remedies, given in Jennings' "Domestic and Fancy Cats," a book you should get (L. Upcott Gill, 1s.).

Lizard-keeping.—T. H. Solomon (West Kensington) has "tried to keep reptiles for about a year, and failed conspicuously." He keeps them in a fern-case 3ft. by 1½, and 2½ft. high, provided with water, &c.; but 10 lizards, 4 tree-frogs, and several other animals have died. I wonder whether he had them all there at one time, because in that case they may not all have got food. He does not say whether he has provided proper food, and I think the reason for his want of success may lie in this direction. He enumerates a number of insects to be found in his garden, and asks which are fit food for lizards and frogs. Frogs will eat almost any kinds of insects, worms, &c., provided these are lively; but the lizards confine their attentions to small flies, meal-worms, and spiders. In reply to T. H. S.'s further queries, suitable food (with the exception of meal-worms) cannot be bought, but must be caught, and must be set free in the case. Where a number of specimens are kept together care must be taken to ensure each getting a fair share of the food. Creatures in hibernation require no food. I should advise that you be content with keeping two or three specimens only, at any rate until you have acquired knowledge of their ways, and how to meet their modest requirements. We have no right to imprison creatures as pets unless we can provide them with all the necessaries they would have no difficulty in finding for themselves in a state of freedom.—W. K. Yonge (Dulwich) asks for "a cheap book on how to keep reptiles." The only one I know is "The Vivarium," by G. C. Bateman, published by L. Upcott Gill, at 7s. 6d.

THE POACHER.

Drawn for The Captain by Charles Treasider

Google

"Rare as epic song is the man who is thorough in what he does."

GEORGE MEREDITH

A GREAT big open grate; pine wood hissing; coal spluttering. . . . What is there as you gaze and nearly doze, what is there to stop fine thoughts running riot in the glow of the fire, in the ruddy, flickering half-light in which you see so many high-lights? Do you not see there your best deeds, every-day deeds, glowing bright and fair, pleasant beyond the realms and dreams of everyday?

* * * * *

They have asked me to "remember." They being "The Old Fag" and the "Art Editor." The O.F. you know; but very likely not many of you fully recognise the existence of the latter. He is very much there, all the same; he has a gas stove for making the water boil for tea, sees to THE CAPTAIN'S outfit being quite complete, hunts me down towards the eighth of every month, and is altogether very human.

Before beginning to "reminisce," a venture which may take me wandering in memories very far away, let me wish you all a Christmas wish or two.

To the Parents of CAPTAINS—the satisfaction of a properly organised wholesome boy or girl. Let me explain what I mean. Parents, when they advertise for a really first-rate plain cook, know that if they get hold of one she can beat any other class of cook, no matter of what nationality, for she can bake bread, make wonderful cakes, extraordinarily good strong soup, with just the right flavouring, but nothing conspicuous, and best of all cream ices and very clear jellies. Parents, I wish you for your boys and girls the standard of excellence of the really first-rate *plain* cook. All round excellence, with hot scones for breakfast. In the right boy or girl article Latin as well as games will be comprised!

Boys and girls, young men and maidens—to you happiness, power of appreciating, a keen sense of humour, heaps of observation; Charles Dickens' perfect observation of ordinary subjects; and, over and above, Robert Louis Stevenson's and Charles Kingsley's eye for the grand and beautiful—the eye that made the art memorials of their pens; then, too, Whyte Melville's spirit of manly sport, the spirit of his

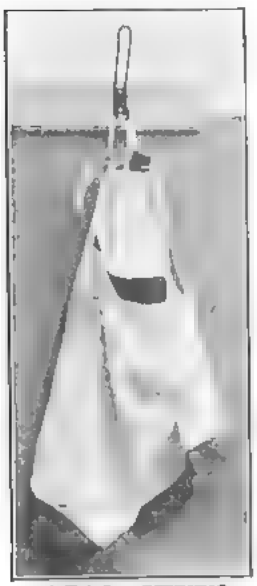
gladiator book, with his "A rum 'un to follow, a bad 'un to beat!" verses as patterns, for your life, or for riding to hounds. Then, again, as just homely attributes, I wish you grace to persevere and a never beaten spirit at whatever game you are playing, in school or on the playing field. A schoolmaster once said to me—we were talking about his boys; he was very keen on their games, especially their cricket, and he was telling me of two small boys—he said, "They are nailers, but they never finish; they are Christian scientists, and they do not acknowledge the existence of defeat—consequently, neither ever wins."

It struck me as rather practical, this, for two small boys to go for all they were worth, maybe beaten, but not giving in.

I wish you, also, hard yet flexible heads for learning and retaining what you learn; and the habit of trying for the highest. Then, last of all, I wish you what perhaps you think you like best, strong, quick, clever feet, legs, and ankles to carry you right through your games-season.

Youth, this is written for you, male and female. The models will adapt themselves to both. Read your CAPTAIN, and help it to become even better than it now is. How can you help it? Why, by being "CAPTAINS all." And now I am going to "remember."

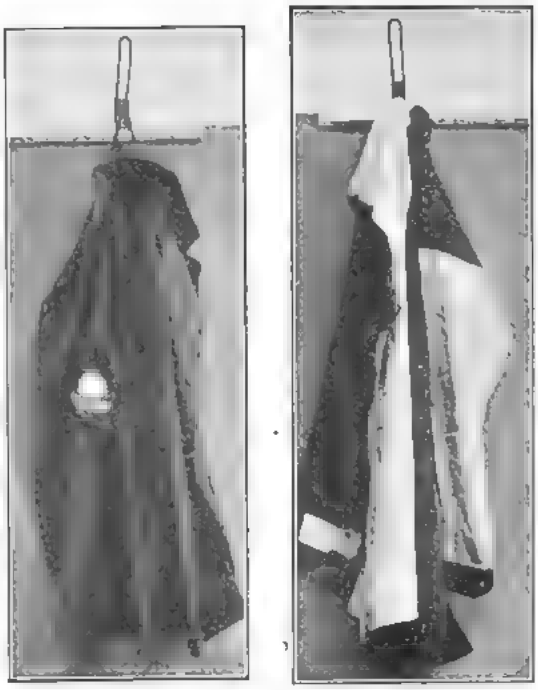
* * * * * *



O.U.A.C. RUNNING KNICKERS—RECORD LONG JUMP.

A great big open grate, pine wood hissing, coal spluttering, — w h a t is there, as I gaze and half doze, to stop fine thoughts running riot in the rosy firelight?

Running clothes long since put away, a zephyr vest and a pair of silk knickers. Among the sparks the green meadows of Oxford in the early spring . . . and those clothes come out quite fresh and new, colour white with a dark blue edge. In such clothes you defend your 'Varsity, to the last fibre of your



OXFORD ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL COAT AND SHIRT.

thigh. How bright a picture, when you have laid them by, comes back with them — youth again, and youthful effort in every thread of cotton and silk! Did they not go one better than Cambridge at the 'Varsity sports? My word, that three-inch margin in the hundred, that six inch extra length in the long jump! The fine old running shoes, the champion pair that fitted every toe, with clean steel spikes, which held you when you did your record. Fireside pictures, would you be human if you did not respect that little spear of metal in the heel that made the take-off sure? Flying machines—nay, give me the human flight, sprung from ankle and thigh, that lifts you zip! from the mark high up and up, and out and out and down, reluctantly down with a wriggling struggle for just a fraction longer in the air—down so that your closed heels cut clean into the sawdust-and-clay well over 23 feet, and no back-fall. Wheup! 'Tis a fine feeling, a big Long-jump.

Those same Oxford meadows were frozen, too, in flood time. That means skates: long blades for speed. But skates are now almost forgotten. Motors go much faster than the fastest of skating joy. But some of those turns of speed, when the

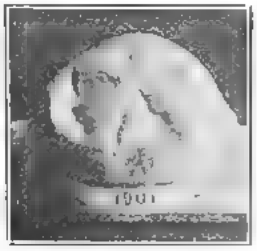
meadows were flooded, were good—the air, as I fancy, comes crisp on my cheeks again.

Oxford—there is more in my memories of you than games. Latin and Greek always did have some fascination for me. Do I dream in the fire that schools cease to teach them? Never; for England's youth would be so much the poorer for the loss.

CORINTHIAN CAP.

The football boots now hanging on the wall bring up memories of good fellowship and of stern endeavour; of school and 'Varsity, and later the very best Corinthian and Southern League games. From nearly every one of these some picture rises; house games at school; the 'Varsity match, Queen's Park Club at Glasgow, and the Football Association Cup Ties ending with the Final at the Crystal Palace. Nay, you cannot look ungratefully at your old boots—boots that have marched and run and striven very hard. Were they not there, the blank in the fire would not be possible to fill. Good-fellowship with all sorts and conditions of men, competitions, health, vigour, energy. Patent-leather toddlers, of the best. And with it comes the call of the very keenest and most earnest fielding. Fielding is more than half the game. The chances always come. That test match, when Clem Hill hit the fizzing skimmer, and I ran and held it, and Sheffield roared and England cheered. Or did I miss it? Nay, not in the firelight.

The wind outside is howling, and its voice tells of thin white driving snow, small and very keen. A match to save at Leeds some years ago—ah! but it was cold, and the wind drove as it drives to-night. We saved that match. The fire hisses with the snow. Bats now in oil seem whispering; and the air seems to be laden with shots; that whirring drive just off the ground, the very grass blades skidding the stroke. And how well George Cox bowled all day with a loose untiring arm; and Joe Vine, you sprinter, how we moved together! Times!—they were times! But we seem to run more runs to-night in the fire than we ever did at Leeds.


ENGLAND CAP v. IRELAND.

FOOTBALL BOOTS: PLAYED THROUGH CUP-TIES TO FINAL AT CRYSTAL PALACE.

CRICKET BOOTS: PLAYED FOR ENGLAND v. AUSTRALIA.

you're not in it; you require varnish, and the varnish so easily comes off. Give me the regulation knob, with its little piece of leather pinned on with a solid brad. . . .

Cricket, "the game with the beautiful name"—perhaps it appeals most. So hard to obtain any mastery at it; it eludes you, you err; and its punishment takes immediate form. Still, to hit the ball hard, clean, and clear on a wet wicket, when every run is golden; that memory is quite

Maybe it is the snow that makes things hum so fast. In the firelight there is time for everything; time to play each stroke perfectly. Is it a delusion? Maybe it is, but this Christmas-time we may dream a little.

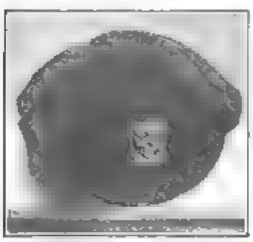
The bicycle ride with a dead headwind up the long hilly road. It was best that day, much best, not to watch too closely the long road. Better to think forward, work the ankles, and rest the head—wise dreamy words, well not to work too hard

a tired part. 'Tis the head that wants rest, and that often gives grand returns for a spell, when the road is very hilly, and you are sound. Call on your heart then, and on your legs, using each as different individuals; a well-ordered frame responds most gamely to the treatment.

Motor cars, are you hissing here in the fire?—what about your petrol, you living mechanism? We praise you for your alertness, so responsive. Such a trier, you are, when you are hurt; and when we watch you retreating down a garage it is like seeing a friend entering the casualty ward. Your very hoot sounds musical, you little 9.11, who some day must make way for more h.p.

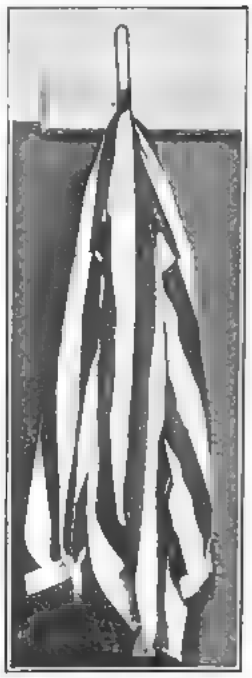
Old England, how much more familiar you have become since we took our first trip, my car and I. . . . A dog or two, one or two walls, one admiral, several sharp corners, two cows, one sheep, which went in at the radiator and came out by the "tail lamp." Little frightened North Devon sheep, how did you like that passing? And all the shepherd said was, "If you'd hurt it, you'd a heërd more." And the chauffeur bought an insurance ticket that very evening.

The calm, ponderous shepherd assisted to release the timid little sheep, and a dog hurried it back to its fold none the worse. Maybe it is grazing now near the lovely yellow gorse and heather which scrapes the sky on the way to Hartland Cliff, grazing unmindful of those terrible rocks on the coast below, where the sea comes swirling on and on, rolling in, with magnificent strength, absolute master of that lonely shore. A ruthless, unrelenting sea, away round to Clovelly of the moaning woods, the one street, the queer little fisher-houses, fuchsia clad, each house swift to provide for you its own good tea and cream. Pleasant you are, Clovelly, in memory to-night! Deep green valleys with pebbly streams, hills difficult to negotiate with a wilful motor, a green road, a jumping stoat, and a poor frightened rabbit, turned that night by the chauffeur into curry.



SUSSEX C.C. CAP.

Autumn, with your leaves dyed red, what is there in you to-night, behind the firelight, that suggests sadness, all among your bronze and purple beauty! The sense of finishing — can that be it? The leaf, when the great "wind sweeper" comes, the gold-red leaf must go. And then only the bough remains, laid by for the next green spring —like the white cricket clothes. The robin redbreast I met at work this morning early, he whistled to me to turn him up some worms. Nature has bidden him put on his scarlet vest for winter wear. His long-drawn piping voice has found him again, to make music in the leafless trees. Brave winter bird! I greet you; you shall have your worm. Oh, Robin, come, sit on my barrow; come early and stay late. Tell me of your summer and we will remember together. The hot sunny days—you in the shady leafy woods, with your silent summer voice, I in the sun with my bat which was once a willow tree, green with sap and alive. They cut it down one autumn, and gave it to me the next spring; and in the summer sunshine, still alive, that bat and I, we made our runs together. It might have stayed a tree and made leaves instead.



FINAL CUP-TIE. SOUTHAMPTON SHIRT.

Then again, when the sparks rise up into the great black chimney, the cricket bat *is* a tree again, a willow at the fringe of a withy bed. For, sometimes, in the firelight I see the picture of my bat, as branch or trunk, supporting a little red fox I knew of, who always sat in a willow tree by a brook in the middle of green meadows.

See, in the firelight, comes the brave "big" pack, sterns all waving, inquiry on every broad, wise forehead, and in every thoughtful eye. . . . Jack, in the brown velveteens, with the musical Tally ho!

. . . . Reynard away in sight of the pack. . . . Music. . . . Eighteen and a half couple of throats busy, not "chiming" now as at feeding time, when they sing on one note; but speaking in solemn, savage tone. Reynard gone away; one field and a half start, and the pack a dappled racing patch of Ramblers, Ranters, and Revellers. A burning scent. . . . How long can it last? What a sportsman, with so little start, running straight like this! Grass and water, water and grass, and the grey takes it all as it comes. A low skim, and his hind legs land him right clear of the bank. Ah! water to pump for pleasure; fast—no creeping—very, very fast, and a brave horse that loves the work.

And now where is my bat? Burnt? No, little Robin; in oil in the corner, forgetting it ever was a tree, bruised and sorry from a mistaken four through the slips. Not a chance. No; but just not plumb in the middle.

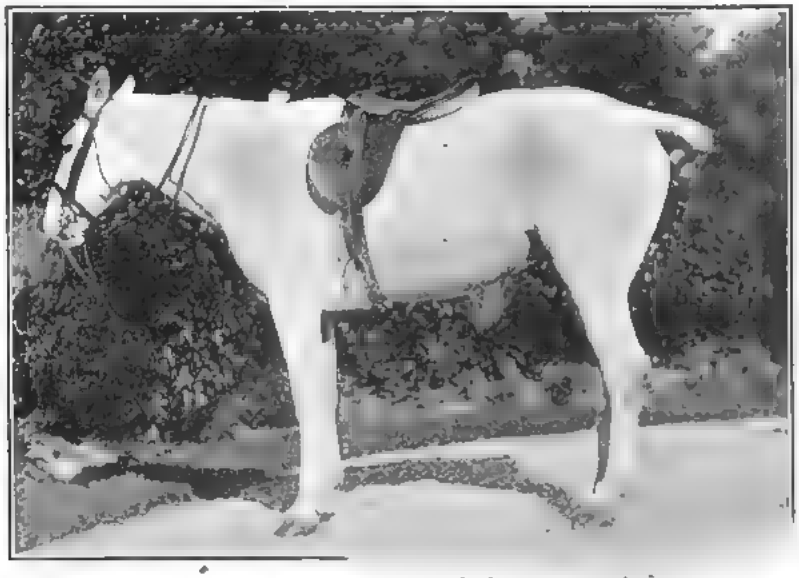
Many thoughts come out of the fire. There are books in the fire. William Somerville, in his preface to *The Chase*, says that, "Pliny observes that those who were designed for great captains were first taught to contest with the swiftest wild beasts in speed, with the boldest in strength, with the most cunning in craft and subtlety. It is most certain," he adds, "that hunting was the exercise of heroes in antiquity. By this they formed themselves for war; and their exploits against wild beasts were a prelude to their future victories."

Our old friend Virgil, in his third Georgic, mentions in connection with hunting, "The greyhound swift, and mastiff's furious breed." And he directs us to feed them with butter-milk, which is quaint.

The fire says that the ancients esteemed hunting, not only as a manly and warlike exercise, but as highly conducive to health. I hope I shall go hunting to-morrow.

Health, bright, clear, crystal health, you we seek; for, without you, we may fail to have charity, which is said to be the greatest of all.

Firelight, friendly with little blue-green flames, dart out to us knowledge, we beseech you, which will make us natural and healthy, and brown with the bloom of the sun and the wind.



SATURN.—Who is "gray-haired, but not quiet as a stone."

THE DUFFER.

By R. S. WARREN BELL,

Author of "Jim Mortimer, Surgeon," "J. O. Jones," &c.

Illustrated by GORDON BROWNE, R.I.

SYNOPSIS

This story concerns the fortunes of George Wellington Denver, a boy of sixteen, who spends several years at Silverdown, a public school, without achieving anything creditable. Finally, being very miserable, and anxious to escape from a disreputable set he is mixed up with, he procures his expulsion by breaking a very strict rule. On hearing that George has purposely brought this disgrace on himself, his father, Dr. Denver, gives the boy a severe horse-whipping. The thrashing is brought to an end by the intervention of Joyce, George's ten-year-old sister, and George dashes out into the storm which is raging at the time. Seeking a favourite spot under the cliffs (he lives at Mellerby, a small seaside place), he throws himself down and gives vent to his misery. There, soaked and forlorn, he is found by Munro, an artist, who occupies a bungalow near the beach. Munro befriends the boy and dries his clothes, but George, nevertheless, catches a severe cold. When he is well enough to leave his room his father tells him that he must go to school again, but George emphatically refuses to do so. Eventually he is given temporary employment in the office of Garrick and Mappin, a firm of Mellerby solicitors. Mr. Mappin, the junior partner, admires Molly, George's pretty sister of seventeen, and it is with the hope of improving his relations with the Denver family that he offers George this post. The boy, though he tries his best, does not give much satisfaction at the solicitors' office, and it is the opinion of Andrews, the managing clerk, that he will never do any good at this kind of work. George, however, has a considerable talent for music, and he is encouraged to persevere in this direction by Mr. Wall, organist at Mellerby parish church, who gives him lessons for nothing. Living in the town is a very old lady, named Mrs. Pardoe, said to be a centenarian. This old lady, who is very sharp-witted, considering her years, keeps in touch with the Denver family by the unconscious agency of little Joyce, who, when some trouble has arisen, or when she particularly wants anything, writes a letter to God, and posts it in an old oak tree which stands near Mrs. Pardoe's garden. These letters are taken out of the tree by Mrs. Pardoe. In one of them Mrs. Pardoe learns that Munro, the artist, is very poor, and so by way of assisting him she commissions him to paint her portrait. In the course of the story it is shown how Munro incurs the enmity of John Blunt (nicknamed, on account of his appearance, "Black Jack"), a huge boatman of disreputable character. One day Blunt publicly insults Munro, and in the course of the encounter that follows gets much the worst of it. Burning with a desire for revenge, the ruffian waits for the artist late that night by the latter's bungalow. Whilst a thunderstorm is raging, Blunt sees the figure of a man approaching the bungalow door. Taking this to be Munro, Blunt fells him with a boat-hook, and is about to repeat the blow when the prostrate man is killed by a flash of lightning, and by the glare of the lightning Blunt sees that his victim is not Munro, but Dr. Denver. All efforts to find Black Jack prove fruitless, and he is supposed to have escaped out to sea in a rowing-boat. It is computed that when the practice has been sold the three children will have about sixty pounds a year to live upon. Mrs. Pardoe, who has recently bought a farm near Mellerby, commissions Munro to offer the children free quarters at the farmhouse. When Munro calls at The Gables to put this proposal before them, he is told by Molly that a London theatrical manager has offered her an engagement, and that she would like to have his advice on the matter. Munro is against her taking the engagement; nevertheless, Molly departs for London to consult her uncle on the subject. Mrs. Pardoe's offer of accommodation is accepted, and George and Joyce prepare to remove to the farm. At this juncture Mr. Smallwood is laid low by an injury to his knee, so he sends for his friend, Tom Deadwood, to act in his stead. Mr. Deadwood, a burly, outspoken rough diamond, makes such a success of his locum tenency that he conceives the idea of buying the practice if he can persuade his father to put down the money. Late one night Black Jack, who has reappeared in the district, robs Deadwood of his watch and chain and makes off across the common and down the face of the cliffs. Accompanied by Dwyer, the coastguard, Deadwood follows hard on his track.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VIII.

HAD it been broad daylight, and the occasion a mere outing with cheery companions, the young doctor would have found much subject for mirth in the misadventures of his descent. The conditions being what they were, however, Deadwood discovered nothing at all to laugh at in his various slippings and slidings, his scratches and bruises, his desperate clutchings at stone, tuft and bush, and, anon, at the stalwart coastguardsman. Once the locum gave himself up for lost, for he found himself gliding speedily downwards and unable to arrest his fall, in spite of his most frantic efforts. But Dwyer, sturdy scion of a seafaring race, rammed the toe of his boot into one of Deadwood's armpits, himself grasping a projecting rock at the same time, and thus Deadwood was saved from sharing the fate of the *débris* which the two men's risky journey sent thundering into the sea, far away below.

At length they reached the narrow plateau near the cliff's foot, and paused to take counsel.

"Get that lantern of yours to work now," said Deadwood, in a low tone. "He cut off to the left."

Below, old king ocean, in his never-ceasing war with the land's ramparts, was flinging his white foemen at the grim cliffs. The shattering of the first line of savage fighters was but the signal for the approach of a second, and these were flung back, hissing and infuriated, but to make way for a third, and thereafter a steady, undaunted succession. So the battle would wage until king ocean called off his fierce fighting dogs and left the gaunt cliffs to look to their wounds, and make ready for the next onset. The noise of the fray made thundering music that was welcome to the two pursuers, for the advance and retreat of the watery army, now coming to grips with the land's defenders, now seething and swirling in disarray among the shingle, had served to cover the sounds of their descent.

"There's caves about here," returned Dwyer. "Maybe he's hiding in one."

"Pretty sure to be. Go ahead."

Cautiously they followed the ledge, which presently led them on to a group of damp, weed-covered rocks, where locomotion was difficult even in daytime. They persevered, however, and at length arrived in a narrow cove, ending in cavernous gloom. The cove was full of water.

"This looks saucy," muttered Deadwood. "Our man must have taken to the water."

"I know the place," said Dwyer. "It's about knee-deep here at high tide."

"Is the tide high now?"

"Yes; it should be near the turn, I reckon."

The words had hardly escaped him when there was a crash, and the lantern was shivered to pieces in his hand.

"Get down, sir!" he cried, sharply. "He's spotted us."

The hunted man very evidently had, for a second missile immediately afterwards struck the rocks close to where they were crouching, and rebounded into the sea.

"This is a bit too thick," ejaculated Deadwood.

Then a jagged stone hit him on the shoulder. Smarting from the pain of the blow, he did not wait to weigh the consequences, but sprang to his feet with a forcible exclamation and jumped into the water.

"Come on, gov'nor!" he shouted to Dwyer. "It's time we stopped that little game."

With that he waded rapidly up the cove, Dwyer making haste to follow him.

The ruffian they were after lingered to fling a few more rocky fragments; the the fusillade ceased. Luckily, Black Jack was no cricketer, and his final shots flew wide. Deadwood and Dwyer plunged desperately through the water; the young doctor's blood was up, and he was absolutely regardless of danger. The water got shallower, and presently only covered their boots. Then they trod on the last tide's deposit of weed and driftwood, and so reached dry land. The mouth of the cave yawned black and threatening in front of them.

"Go steady, sir," panted Dwyer. "Likely as not he'll heave a rock at us."

"I'm going in," said Deadwood, recklessly, "rock or no rock —*hullo!*"

He had good cause to cry out, for the fugitive had issued forth with a bull-like rush and bowled him over as he stood groping for a match.

"Hold him!" yelled Deadwood, struggling to regain his feet on the slippery pebbles. "Take him low!"

The old Rugby cry came involuntarily to his lips, for Black Jack's onset was for all the world like a three-quarter's dash for the goal-line. In the gloom Dwyer saw his companion prostrate, and a form of great bulk looming close upon himself. Guessing as to the precise mark, he hit out with his fist and got home with such success on Black Jack's cheek-bone that the ruffian uttered a wolfish howl and staggered to one side, checked for the moment. But only for a moment, for the giant outlaw was of a human piece with the stony fastnesses in whose bowels he had been lurking all these weeks. Seeing that Dwyer was about to repeat his blow, the robber swept him aside, bear-like, with a swing of his mighty paw, and turned nimbly to meet Deadwood, who jumped in and closed with him. For a very brief interval the two men strove convulsively for the mastery; then Blunt lifted the doctor bodily and, with a grunt of triumph, flung him to the ground.

Dwyer, hovering around in hopes of catching the longshoreman at a disadvantage, received a buffet that turned him giddy, and as he reeled back into Deadwood, who was struggling to his feet, a splash announced that Black Jack had again taken to the water.

The outlaw evidently intended to retrace his way to the top of the cliffs; there was no other method of egress with the water at almost its highest point. Flight to the left meant a long swim round a rocky headland. Up the cliffs again it must be, then.

Collecting their slightly scattered wits, Deadwood and Dwyer settled down doggedly to the chase. Again they waded through the water and stumbled over the weed-clad rocks; then on breathlessly to the ledge, from which point they dimly discerned their quarry scaling the cliff with the desperate speed of a hunted animal. Hoping against hope that, once they

gained the summit, they could run him down on the open ground, they toiled up in his wake, wet, bruised, and aching. With never a pause Black Jack ascended higher and higher, dragging his great frame up with marvellous activity, and reached his goal while his pursuers had still half their steep upward journey to accomplish. On the cliff's crest he paused and peered down, and at that moment their pipe. "By George! though, coastguard, I shouldn't like to have your job with that hairy merchant prowling round. What price either of us if we tackled him alone?"

But Dwyer wasn't in a mood for conversation. He had a long night's coast patrol in front of him, but the treatment he had received at Black Jack's hands had left him little stomach for his duties. Wet and worn as he was, how-

THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE YAWNED BLACK AND THREATENING IN FRONT OF THEM.

gaze was mesmerically drawn up to the spot where he stood, dimly silhouetted against the driving clouds. As they looked, drawing their breath painfully, he waved his hand with a mocking gesture and disappeared. And when, spent and weary, they dragged themselves on to the short, rough grass that coated the cliff's summit, there was no sign of the man whose attempted capture had cost them such strenuous toil.

"Well, we've had a good run for our money," said Deadwood, philosophically feeling for his ever, his work had to be done, and before resuming his march he must go back to his cottage for another lantern. Still, he had the heart of an Englishman and sailor blood in his veins. Though he felt more like a stiff glass of hot rum and a warm bed than a long, lonely tramp over the rock-bound territory entrusted to his care by my lords of Whitehall, he straightened out his disordered raiment and once more assumed the cool, emotionless demeanour of an Admiralty servant.

"I have to take my chance of that, sir," he

said. Then, raising his hand in salute, "I wish you good-night, sir."

"Hang on!" cried Deadwood, about to strike a match. "What about that lantern?—what's the damage?"

"Government lantern, sir. Another at home."

Deadwood wanted to tip Dwyer, but he had a certain amount of tact, and saw that the thing must be done delicately, for the coastguard was not a man of the ever-ready-palm order.

"Look here," said the locum, "what about that cave? Think my watch is there?"

"Not very likely, sir," replied the coastguard stolidly.

"Suppose we have a look round it to-morrow?"

"In the afternoon, sir, I'm at your service," returned Dwyer.

"Good. We'll say three o'clock. Where do you hang out?"

"Cottage just by the bungalows. You can't miss it, sir. It's the only one there."

"Right! I'll call for you. Good-night, coastguard!"

"Good-night, sir."

Once again Dwyer's hand went up in salute, and then he strode off with a smart, swinging step.

"Excellent chap, that," quoth Deadwood, heading homewards across the common.

On the following afternoon, at the appointed hour, he called for Dwyer, and together they proceeded to the cave. It was low water, so they walked round to it along the beach. With the aid of the coastguard's lantern they submitted Black Jack's lair to a thorough search, but all they found was a tattered blanket, an old jersey, some fragments of food, and a big heap of dry grass that had evidently served as a bed.

"Poor quarters, these," said Deadwood, puffing at his pipe. "Wonder where he's roosting now!"

"Got away up the coast, I should say, sir. The police are looking out for him, but I doubt if they'll catch him. He'll get a ship and be off to foreign parts I should think, sir."

"With my watch," added Deadwood, ruefully. "A good old ticker, too."

When they parted at Dwyer's cottage Deadwood slipped five shillings into the coastguard's hand. "A little something for bacey," he explained.

"Thank you, sir," said Dwyer, touching his cap.

"Very excellent chap," was Deadwood's comment, as he wended his way back to The Gables.

Naturally enough, he felt very sore about the loss of his watch—a present from his father when he entered St. Matthew's Hospital; and so his astonishment and gratification may be imagined when, on coming down to breakfast the next morning, he found a packet by his plate which, the maid explained, had been deposited that morning in the letter-box. It was labelled simply, "The Doctor," in very homely caligraphy, and contained the watch and chain which Black Jack had stolen from him.

"By George!" ejaculated Deadwood, "this beats Maskelyne and Cooke. I'll wager our bearded friend had no hand in *this* deed of simple honesty."

CHAPTER IX.

JOYCE COMMENCES A CURE

AT length the time came for George and Joyce to remove to the Hall Farm. Mr. Deadwood had succeeded in extracting the purchase money for the practice from his father—who parted with it with some misgivings—and had likewise prevailed upon his grandmother, who favoured him above the rest of the family because he bore a strong likeness to her late husband, to supply him with a sufficient sum for taking over the furniture, the vehicles in the coach-house, and a couple of the horses—one of them being, of course, the now docile Emperor. Thus a sale was rendered unnecessary. Miss Mabel Deadwood came to keep house for her brother, and Miss Wellington, after seeing her nephew and niece safely established at the farm, took wing to Bath. Mr. Deadwood kept on Poole and the other servants—thus the transfer of the practice was effected in a quiet and satisfactory fashion.

The farmhouse was a roomy, snug building, situated about a mile from Mellerby Hall, of which estate it had formed a part before lowness of funds had driven its squire owner to part with it. The Hall itself had long since passed out of the hands of the aristocratic family whose country seat it had been, and was now inhabited by a retired brewer—a gentleman afflicted with one of those chronic complaints by which, strangely enough, the possession of much money is so often accompanied as a set-off, it would seem, against the good things of this world. So the brewer, though his feet trod velvet pile, though from his study windows he gazed upon a spacious park and stately trees, though surrounded by every

luxury and the portraits of other people's ancestors, which he had bought in at his own valuation, would probably have bartered all for the health of the groom who whistled over his work in the stable-yard.

Joyce, in the course of her walks about the farm lands, used often to catch sight of this miserable Crœsus, wrapped up to the chin, poking round the outskirts of his own domain. And he, in time, came to recognise her, and would nod pleasantly to her, and pass the time of day, as the country people put it. Thus a sort of friendship sprang up between them. When the brewer went out for his limited strolls he would look out for the little girl, and was disappointed if he did not see her, while Joyce herself generally chose the path which led her along the hedge forming the boundary of the present Hall estate—for the yonder side of it had lately become the brewer's favourite "beat."

One day, when she was blackberrying, he put his head over a gate and beckoned to her.

"There are some very fine blackberries just here," he said; "you may come and get them if you like. I'm afraid you'll have to climb over the gate, as it's padlocked."

"Thank you very much," said Joyce, with alacrity.

The little girl felt very sorry for her kindly invalid neighbour. Mrs. Elphinstone, the bailiff's wife, who was much given to gossip and especially to conversation about illnesses, had told her that Mr. Lawson—for that was the brewer's name—suffered from a disease of the nerves which made him afraid to go in a train or carriage, or even beyond his own private grounds. He had a big, loud-voiced wife, and several sons who were making hay of the large fortune he had amassed. As they found the Hall dull, and its hypochondriacal master rather trying, they spent as little of their time as possible at Mellerby. So it came about that Mr. Lawson was often left alone with the servants and his private attendant—a state of being which did not improve the depressed condition of his mind. True, his family had tried all they could to get him away from the Hall, but without effect. He was as stubborn as steel on that point. Through the lodge gates he would not go, notwithstanding the arguments and persuasions of his wife and sons, and the admonitions of his medical advisers. He wouldn't—and there it ended.

Joyce had often thought what a pity this was. In the bleak winter, as Mrs. Elphinstone said, there was the sunny Mediterranean, or Egypt, or the West Indies—all sorts of nice warm places which would do him a world of good. But no—all the winter through Mr. Lawson insisted on remaining at the Hall, which was damp, owing to the lake which lay behind it, and favoured with a large variety of draughts. It didn't matter. There he stuck, as Mrs. Elphinstone said, like a limpet, and it seemed probable (to quote that dismal-minded dame again) that there he *would* stick till he was carried out toes first—to the churchyard.

From which it will be gathered that Mrs. Elphinstone was not the most cheery companion one might have in a lonely farmhouse on a bleak autumn evening.

"I have thought several times that you might like these blackberries," said Mr. Lawson, pointing to a bush laden with huge bunches of the fruit, all quite black and ripe, "so just pick as many as you please."

He gave a nervous cough as he finished speaking, and retreated from the long grass to a dry little mound.

"Oh, thank you so much," said Joyce. "I have never seen such big blackberries in my life."

The invalid's sallow, lined face, with its heavy pouches under the eyes, lit up with pleasure. He looked at the damp grass under the bushes, hesitated a moment, and then stepped off his dry mound.

"Shall I help you?" he asked, advancing into the grass with unwonted temerity.

"Oh, if you *will* reach down the high ones, I should be so much obliged!" returned Joyce.

The retired brewer thereupon fell to pulling down the high branches, and for a few minutes actually forgot that he was in serious peril of getting his feet wet. The pile of luscious-looking berries in Joyce's basket rose higher and higher with four hands at work, and Mr. Lawson began to wonder how it was that picking a few blackberries gave him so much pleasure. It was such a very simple, innocent occupation, and such an inexpensive one! Which reflection was not unnatural when it is remembered that all his life through Mr. Lawson had paid a pretty penny for his most simple pleasures, for his wife was a lady who did not set much store by anything that did not cost a good deal of money.

At length it seemed to Mr. Lawson that he could feel the damp of the grass through the soles of the extra thick boots—to say nothing of the heavy woollen socks—that he wore. With a little shiver he retreated to the mound again.

"You have a good many now," he said, by way of apology.

"Yes, I think I have gathered quite enough,"

replied Joyce; "that is, I think *we* have," she added, politely. "So I will say good-bye, and thank you very much indeed."

She put the basket on her left arm, and advanced towards the mound to shake hands with her kind host. The poor brewer glanced over the gate towards the farm. It was not far away; still, Joyce's path lay across two pretty long fields. The light was failing, and there might be tramps about, or bulls, or even savage horses. He had heard of horses attacking people. Then a great struggle took place in the invalid's mind. He did not like the little maid to make the journey alone; on the other hand, if *he* went with her, he would have to come back by himself in the gathering gloom of the October evening. He had not been outside the Hall grounds for two years, and the bare idea of going beyond them was to his afflicted imagination a truly fearsome prospect. Nevertheless, he had been as bold as most men before this disease had sapped his courage; the talk and the blackberry-gathering had done him good. Some of his old self surged up; he gripped his stick tightly, called to his aid every little grain of the manhood left in him, and stepped off the mound.

"We mustn't say good-bye here," he replied, in a voice that almost quavered. "I will see you to the farm."

"Oh, please don't trouble," cried Joyce, who had heard enough about him to know that such a journey would constitute a most unusual expedition on his part. "I can look after myself quite well, thank you."

He almost turned back at that, but just managed to keep his courage up to the sticking-point.

"It is late for a little girl like you to be out by herself. Come, I will see you home—or, at least, part of the way," he added, icy fear taking his heart in a fast grip.

Joyce therefore clambered over the gate—Mr. Lawson holding the blackberries whilst she did so—and then her friend followed.

For a moment he stared blankly and timorously about him. It was to him as if he had entered a foreign country. Then, noticing that Joyce was gazing at him in some wonder, and ashamed for his manhood's sake to play the coward before a little child, his hand closed convulsively on his stick, and he strode forward boldly.

"I suppose you go to school?" he said, when they had walked some way in silence.

As he spoke he glanced apprehensively at the hedge, and uttered his customary nervous cough.

"Yes," said Joyce, "I go to Miss Playfair's."

"And is it a nice school?"

"Very nice. We have such a dear Scotch governess. When she gives us dictation we can't always understand what she says, and make such funny mistakes. She teaches us French as well, and pronounces it in a Scotch way. You *would* laugh if you could hear her."

Though the brewer felt more like crying than laughing, with an effort he managed to produce a hollow chuckle. Then Joyce went on:—

"And she says such funny things to us. She asked me the other day why I hadn't got a *seam* in my hair."

"A seam? What did she mean?" asked the brewer, in a shaky voice.

"A *parting*!" explained Joyce, with a laugh that rang over the meadows and comforted her companion immensely.

"A very amusing lady," agreed the brewer. "But she is kind, you say?"

"Oh, she is simply *sweet*," said Joyce, enthusiastically. "She doesn't get a bit angry when we can't understand her. We like her so much," added the little maid, confidentially, "that at Christmas we are going to give her a work-basket—a really good one that stands on legs."

"Really!" said the brewer, approvingly. "I should like—that is, if I may—h'm—I should like to—er—contribute to it, if you will allow me."

"Oh, you *are* kind," said Joyce. "I daresay you may, but I must ask the other girls. You see, what we should like to give her is a new bicycle, but we are afraid we can't afford it. Her bicycle was smashed all to pieces by a dray the other day, and as she was on the wrong side of the road the dray people won't give her a new one. I asked George—my brother—if they weren't obliged to, and he said they needn't, and, of course, he knows, because he's in a lawyer's office."

The brewer coughed rather noisily.

"I am sorry to hear about the bicycle," he said. "Now, suppose you thought of giving her a new one, and couldn't quite get all the money, perhaps I could without her knowing, you know—just make it up. Eh? Suppose you talk to the girls about it, and tell me what they think?"

"That *would* be kind of you," said Joyce, radiantly. "Oh, how pleased she would be! I don't think she gets a very high salary, and so she can't afford to buy one for herself. Oh, dear! I wish to-morrow morning was here so that I could tell the girls."

The brewer smiled sadly, thinking of his

hoards of money, which even his family's extravagances could not diminish to any great extent. What was the cost of a bicycle to *him*!

The kind-heartedness of these children touched him. Their pennies meant a very great deal to them and yet they gave them away to make a lady they loved happy. What was he doing with his pounds—his hundreds and thousands of pounds towards making anybody happy?

He had for the nonce forgotten himself and his fancied ailments. Of a sudden the farmyard gate loomed into view—and then he remembered. The cold sweat broke out upon his brow as the bailiff, Mr. Elphinstone, who was talking to one of the labourers, approached them

"My wife was wondering where Miss Joyce had got to," he said, raising his hat to Mr. Lawson. "Very kind of you, sir, to come with her"

"Not at all, not at all," said the brewer, glancing back with a shudder at the misty fields. "We were blackberrying, and it got a little late for her to be out alone. Now I will say good-bye, my dear," he added, putting out his hand.

As Joyce took his hand the warmth of her heart shone in her eyes. Instinctively he stooped, so that she might kiss his poor careworn face Then he turned abruptly on his heel.

Joyce grasped the bailiff by the sleeve. "*Go with him!*" she whispered quickly, and ran off to the house with her load of blackberries.

CHAPTER X

THE ATTRACTIONS OF LONDON.

MEANWHILE George was pegging away at work which his soul loathed. He knew he would never make a lawyer, yet saw no path to tread save that which led from the Hall Farm to the offices of Garrick and Mappin. There appeared to be no other profession, no other occupation, open to him. His music could not possibly yield him a living for years—if ever. He was simply clever at it so were heaps of other people. He knew (for Mr. Wall had told him) that the London musical training schools were every year turning out hundreds of highly talented musicians who found it a matter of considerable difficulty even to scrape along and earn their bread. These were people who were proficients in at least one instrument—who could play the most difficult music at sight, and were full of enthusiasm and love for their art What could he, therefore, a boy of sixteen, expect to do?

At any rate his law work yielded him a certain wage. The partners had raised his salary from four shillings to seven and sixpence a week—an increase which the worthy Andrews, as a man of sentiment, approved, but from a business standpoint regarded as so much money thrown away.

"It was Mr. Garrick's doing," he told his wife. "It's not Mr. Mappin's way to pay a penny more to anyone than he can help."

"Still," returned Mrs. Andrews, "when a young gentleman has a pretty sister——"

Andrews pulled thoughtfully at his pipe. He was a man who kept a guard on his tongue, but he knew he could speak openly to his wife

"That," he said, emitting a stream of smoke, "was largely knocked on the head by the Doctor's death. A gentleman can't very well go courting to a house which is in mourning. They tell me Miss Denver is on the stage, which may account for Mr. Mappin's going up to London nowadays oftener than he used to, and coming back in a worse temper than he went up in. Shouldn't wonder if she's a bit high-and-mighty with him now she's getting her portrait put in the papers."

"*That* bit of a girl?" demanded Mrs. Andrews, incredulously.

"Seems so," replied the managing clerk. "Jones showed me a paper with it in only yesterday. It said underneath that she'd never been on the stage before, but had made a hit straight away in some play—I forget its name I'll borrow the paper from Jones, if you like, so that you can have a look at her for yourself."

"Ah! I should like to," returned Mrs. Andrews, who was still unwilling to believe that a girl who had been running about in short frocks only a few years since was now what one might call a celebrity or, at least, sufficiently well known to be talked about in the Press.

"Well," she added, "it's a great pity. Her poor father and mother would never have allowed it if they'd been alive."

"If they were alive she wouldn't have to do it," retorted Andrews.

"It's not the sort of life I'd choose for any young girl," continued Mrs. Andrews, shaking her head. "Look at the creatures who come down here and act their bits of plays in the Assembly Rooms—tousled, painted hussies, the whole lot of 'em. And the men are no better, the grinning puppies. Fancy Miss Denver—as

nice and dainty a young lady as ever I set eyes on—mixing up with that lot!"

"You may be sure her uncle won't let her mix up with them more than is necessary," said Andrews, soothingly.

"What will she care for any uncle!" demanded Mrs. Andrews. "She's a young party that likes her own way. *She's* not one to be lectured and taken care of by uncles *or* aunts!"

"*He* won't lecture her," Andrews assured his wife. "Too sensible. I saw a bit of him when he was settling up the Doctor's affairs—and I've had letters from him, too. A solid, level-headed man, he is, and understands human nature. 'Here's my niece,' says he to himself, 'got to earn her living. What can she do? Sing and play and dress herself. What sort of a job can she get? Nursery governess. Will *she* ever settle down to washing little children's necks and ears and teaching them how to spell 'cat'? Not she. What then? Here she's offered a job on the stage, and wants to take it. If I say she mustn't she'll take it all the same. Better keep in with her, and let her do what she wants to do. She'll get married before very long, and then she'll be off my hands. Till then, she shall regard me as her best friend and take my advice. . . .' That's about what he said to himself, old woman, you may depend upon it."

"I don't care what either of you say—it's not right," persisted Mrs. Andrews. "Still, you can bring the paper home. I should like to have a look at her picture."

The managing clerk had surmised quite correctly that it was not business alone which took Mr. Mappin up to town nowadays so much more frequently than of yore. He always supplied Andrews with some very valid excuse for his absence, but the managing clerk happened to know exactly when the firm's affairs necessitated Mr. Mappin's presence in London, and when they did not. However, it was not Andrews' duty to comment on the unnecessary expeditions that the junior partner saw fit to make; he merely looked down his nose and waited with some amusement for the outcome of these superfluous journeys to town. He feared that if things resulted contrary to Mr. Mappin's hopes, there would be a bad time for everybody in the office. "And if the young lady won't have him," thought Andrews, "what about the boy? We don't really want him, and if Mr. Garrick retires at Christmas, as he talks about doing, Mr. Mappin will be able to discharge the lad or keep him on, as he pleases."

Yes, to a philosophical observer like Andrews the situation was full of interest.

The dead leaves of late autumn were lying about in big heaps when Munro was filled with a strange yearning for London pavements. Foggy, slushy, gloomy—London might be all these, and yet possess irresistible attractions. Mellerby had been very well in the summer, with its sweet air and simple out-door existence. But now the little fleet of sailing-boats no longer lay at their moorings; yawl and cutter and sloop had been beached for the winter, well above the highest possible encroaching line of the ocean; the other bungalows were empty; the shore had donned her dull garb of winter desolation.

Munro bethought himself of that cheery little club in Chelsea where he had been wont to foregather with fellow-painters—of the grateful glow of the big fire when the streets without were inhospitably damp and dark; of the chop and steak suppers, the jolly chat and good fellowship, the feeling of enjoyment and ease which pervaded one after a hard day's work. Here men who earned thousands mixed with men who earned only hundreds; it made no difference whatever. The dominating wit and laughter-maker of the club was its most impecunious member. Nobody "put on frills"; by unspoken, unwritten agreement you were expected to leave your cares on the doorstep and make yourself as companionable and agreeable as possible, so long as you enjoyed that great blaze in the wide hearth. The one qualification for the club was that you earned your bread with brush, palette, and the sweat of your brow. Every man that passed through its portals was a worker—a professional artist; some were married, some were single—whatever their state they were good fellows—robust, healthy, travelled, many of them bearded, most of them bronzed from exposure to sun and wind when in pursuit of subjects for their canvas.

Munro guessed that the club would be filling up now for the winter. He could hear in fancy the hearty welcome home to the returned wanderer, and the deep-chested laughter which greeted every good sally and anecdote; he could smell the tobacco burning fragrantly in great briar bowls—and he longed to be among it all again. He knew he held a firm place in the regard of the club—his welcome home would be of the heartiest. The club respected him for his common sense, his manliness, his unselfish praise of men more successful than himself, and his sturdy uphill battling with ill-luck. In addition he exhibited exceptional skill at

billiards, and played a very sound game of Bridge—both recommendations in a club to the respect of one's fellow-clubmen.

"I'll go," said Munro. "The Dwyers will keep an eye on this shanty. I'm afraid I must leave you with them too, Rufus, my lad; while as for Miss Florence and the bird, I've an idea that little Miss Joyce would like to have them at the farm till I come back."

Rufus surveyed Munro with reproachful eyes, almost as if he had read the artist's thoughts. Miss Florence, now grown into a graceful young lady, rubbed herself against her master's leg. "Why break up our little circle?" she seemed to say. "We've been very happy together." The parrot stole a sidelong glance at the group. Certainly *he* could do with a change. His vocabulary, too, badly needed some extending. He was tired of teasing Rufus and trying to provoke a quarrel between the mastiff and cat—especially as he never succeeded, for Rufus and Miss Florence were perfectly good friends, though, now she was grown up, Miss Florence did not take nearly so many liberties with her large companion. It behoved her, as a young lady, to be more dignified.

On the following Saturday afternoon Munro invited George and Joyce to tea, so that he might broach his plan to them.

"*'Ere they are!*" shouted the parrot, in lusty greeting, as they appeared in the doorway. "*'Ip—'ip—'ooray!*"

Joyce ran up to the cage. "How-do-you-do, Polly?" she cried. "I see you've not forgotten me!"

"*'Ow are yer?*" returned the parrot, peering at her with his head on one side.

"Quite well, thank you, Polly, dear! How are *you*?"

"*Bit of a cold!*" muttered the parrot, clearing his throat with much unnecessary noise in excellent imitation of his late landlord master.

Miss Florence, of course, gushed over the visitors quite after the manner of a young lady receiving friends, while Rufus strode round Joyce in a way which clearly said: "Aren't you going to take any notice of *me*, Miss Joyce?"

"I am going away soon," said Munro, when they had sat down to tea, "and I want to know if you will look after my parrot and cat?"

"Of *course* we will!" cried Joyce. "Dear pussy!" she added, pressing her cheek against Miss Florence's sleek coat. "I will do all I can to make you happy, dear!"

"*Oh, go hon!*" said the parrot, in a highly sarcastic tone.

"Be quiet, Polly! I shall say what I like to pussy, and if you are not more polite I sha'n't have you at the farm," cried Joyce.

The parrot pondered over this remark for some time, but could not think of a more effective rejoinder than "*Rats!*" uttered at intervals in a very still, reflective tone.

After a little conversation it was settled that the cat and parrot should be left under Joyce's care, according to Munro's suggestion. So on the Monday they were conveyed to their new home by Tom Dwyer, who had likewise agreed to look after the mastiff during its master's absence.

This matter being settled, Munro packed up his pictures, clothes, and painting utensils, and set out with a light heart to London town. But on the first night of his arrival he did not repair to his little club. Instead, having dined, he betook himself to the theatre where Molly Denver was engaged. For this occasion only he dashed into unaccustomed expense and bought a stall. By a curious chance Mr. Mappin was also in the stalls on this particular evening (being called to town, as he had informed Andrews, on an important will case the firm had in hand), and it also happened that Molly, shading off the dazzling glare of the footlights by the dexterous use of her fan, saw both of them. Mappin was in the second, Munro in the third, row of stalls, near the middle. They were both noticeable men—Mappin for his dark, handsome face, well-shaped head, and supple figure; Munro for his healthy tan, square chin, and powerful frame. The discovery excited Molly, lending a new light to her eyes and additional gaiety to her tone. How pleasant it was to be pretty and successful! Her path seemed strewn with roses.

During the evening her thoughts were busy with these two admirers. She pitted them, girl-like, against each other, compared their appearance, qualities, gifts. Mr. Mappin did everything well, and was always what is called "nice"; Mr. Munro was much quieter, sometimes too quiet, but whatever he said or did, he always seemed to inspire one with a sense of solidity and strength. He ought to have been a soldier, thought Molly.

Such were the ingenuous reflections of her eighteen-year-old mind. Of course, she was not in love with either—she was merely weighing each against the other in a girlish endeavour to determine which she liked the better.

After the performance Mappin went round

to the stage-door. He had met her several times at her uncle's house, whither he had gone in his capacity of legal adviser to her family, and hoped now to enjoy the privilege of driving her home.

Munro, after some hesitation, hailed a cab and drove to Chelsea. He had seen Mappin, and guessed that the latter would meet Molly afterwards. Otherwise, the artist might have delayed his return to Chelsea, as he felt sure that Molly would be pleased to see him.

At length Molly appeared in the doorway, piquant and smiling. She shook hands with the young solicitor, and then looked further afield, quite expecting to find Munro there as well.

But instead of Munro there loomed up a tall youth in a yellow ulster, who greeted her with an off-hand air of proprietorship. It was her cousin, and so, after a little chat with Mappin, she slipped her fingers round one sleeve of the yellow ulster, and in this perfectly proper company retreated down the narrow alley which led to the street, whence, *per* omnibus, the two young people travelled home to Bayswater.

As Mappin strode off the stage-door keeper winked at a scene-shifter who was lounging near, clay pipe in mouth.

"No go," said the stage-door keeper, glancing at Mappin's disappearing form and retiring into his little den with a chuckle.

CHAPTER XI.

THE KNEELING FIGURE.

"HIS temper," said Andrews to his wife, one day, "has never been what you would call sweet. Still, one could get along with him. But now he's like a bear with a sore head—finding fault and badgering the staff all day long. It's little Miss D.—that's the trouble."

As November melted into December Mr. Mappin's little trips up to town had increased in number. And his temper had shortened proportionately as his stays in town lengthened. Andrews, in consequence, found himself up to the eyes in work which his principal should rightly have done, and, in addition, was hampered and annoyed by the junior partner's unreasoning censures.

Andrews was only human, and, as is usual in offices, the testiness of the chief rebounded from the managing clerk on to Jones, the senior in the outer room, from Jones on to Smith, and from Smith on to the long-suffering "boy." George likewise came in for a share of the general ill-humour pervading the place. The only person who preserved an equable mind during this trying period was Barry, who whistled and hummed his way in and out of the office in a manner which roused the envy of those who really had to work. The articled clerk hunted two or three days a week, played for the Mellerby Mixed Hockey team, got all the shooting he could, and spent his evenings agreeably enough at the club, or at the houses of such friends as the Peels and Beresfords, where he essayed to charm the ears of those assembled with dainty selections from his repertory of comic songs. Meanwhile that excellent manufacturer of footgear, Barry senior, was thinking with satisfaction of the son who would in course of time blossom into a solicitor and a gentleman. It appeared to him now and then that the budding lawyer was managing to get through plenty of money, but he paid up unmurmuringly, contenting himself with the reflection that the lad would be making a good fat income for himself before many years had passed by.

George and Barry were now the best of friends. George had discovered that inside Barry's crust of brag, swagger, and love of showing off, there lay a good deal of solid worth. Barry might be inclined to bully and bounce, but, by way of compensating virtues, he had plenty of pluck, and was the soul of generosity. There was nothing in the least underhand about him; he expressed his likes and dislikes in an admirably straightforward but dreadfully tactless manner; he made many blunders, and had to swallow a deal of sarcasm from sharp-tongued friends—but he seemed to get out of every difficulty and "come up smiling" with a serene self-confidence which, while it irritated his small-minded associates, merely amused those with wit and sense enough to read the man aright.

A young fellow with ample means can generally depend upon having a good time in a country district. Barry had become quite popular in the neighbourhood, in spite of his faults; so he went on his way rejoicing— hunting, shooting, dancing, flirting, and making the most of his youth and health. He did everything, in fact, except the thing he had been sent to Mellerby to do. It would seem that learning the law appeared to him the one objectionable and unessential item of his being.

It was through Barry's unconscious agency that a remarkable and uncanny experience fell to the lot of our hero. Barry was acquainted with Mr. Lawson, Joyce's blackberrying acquaintance, for the retired brewer and Barry senior had been boys together at a Roman

Catholic seminary. On coming to Mellerby, Barry had paid his respects to Mr. Lawson, and had afterwards gone to the Hall about once a month to see his father's old friend—generally on Sunday. These expeditions suited the articled clerk well enough when the brewer's family and their lively friends were at the Hall, but when Mr. Lawson was by himself there Barry cut his visits as short as possible.

"For," he explained to George, "the old man gives me the hump. Got a new disease every time I call. Must be a perfect museum of 'em by this time."

Attached to the Hall was a Roman Catholic chapel, of more recent construction than the Hall itself, but nevertheless a building of considerable age. Beneath its stone flooring lay the ashes of the baronets who had once flourished at the Hall, while near the chancel was a huge oaken pew in which had worshipped, in times long gone by, the proud squires whose remains were now shrouded in lead. This pew was reached from the Hall by a private door. The little chapel's congregation consisted principally of country folk, reinforced by Mr. Lawson and a few of his family and friends. A quiet, solemn little place was the chapel, with its soft light burning perpetually before the altar—a place to think in—a place full of shadows. Two miles away was the bustling seaside town; here, tacked humbly on to the great Hall, stood this tiny house of worship, still and holy, a gentle, dream-begetting link with the long ago.

To Barry's unromantic twentieth-century mind, however, the chapel suggested but one idea—and that a very practical one.

"I say," he said, one day when Andrews was out of the room, "I've got a tip for you. Why not practise on the organ in the Hall chapel? You wouldn't have to come down to the church after tea then. Save you a long trudge."

"But I'm not a Roman Catholic," said George.

"What does that matter, you kite?" exclaimed Barry. "It's only an organ—same as yours."

"I mean—ought I to play our sort of music in *your* chapel?" said George.

"Don't be a cuckoo," responded Barry, politely. "What does it matter? You'd be all nice and quiet and comfy there, with nobody to disturb you."

George considered the suggestion. It certainly would be far nearer than the parish church, and save him a lot of time.

"Who must I ask?" he said.

"Oh, I'll get leave for you," returned Barry. "Old Lawson runs the show, you know. His valet plays the organ—beastly badly, too. Tell you what—come along this evening. I'll blow for you. It'll do me good. Been so wet I haven't had any exercise bar billiards all this week.

When work was over for the day, therefore, Barry and George set off for the farm together. Joyce having dispensed tea in her usual collected manner—and in the course of the meal severely cross-examined Mr. Barry as to the amount of work he had done lately—the two friends repaired to the Hall. Mr. Lawson readily granted the desired permission, and sent a servant with them to light the organ-candles. The man having done this and retired, Barry disappeared behind the crimson curtain which sheltered the blower from the view of the congregation, and George, selecting a voluntary from a book which lay close to his hand, commenced to play.

Musician-like, he was soon engrossed in his task. It was a far smaller and older organ than that in Mellerby church, but of a very sweet, mellow tone. George played on enjoyably, each moment becoming better acquainted with the instrument and its possibilities. The solemn hush of the little chapel inspired him; there was a suggestion of incense in the air which was soothing to the senses; it was a peculiar, novel experience playing here in this little chapel, sacred to an old-world creed which had survived in fear and trembling until more enlightened times granted freedom of religious thought to every man according to his wont.

Presently, as he played on, he felt that his gaze was being indefinably drawn from the music. A little cold shiver ran through him. He was excited, of course, that was all. Steadying his nerves with an effort, he bent his eyes more rigidly than ever on the music. Again came that strange feeling, compelling him to gaze elsewhere. At length, drawing in his breath sharply, he looked towards the altar, and perceived, kneeling on the steps, the dim figure of a priest, his head bent in prayer, his whole attitude expressive of profound devotion.

"What's up?" came from behind the curtain in Barry's matter-of-fact tones.

"N—nothing," said George, turning to the keyboard again.

"You left off rather suddenly," remarked Barry, plying his wooden bellows-handle with renewed vigour as George went on playing.

After a time, fearsomely, George stole another glance at the altar. The figure had vanished. At the same moment he almost jumped out of his skin at hearing a voice at his elbow.

HE PERCEIVED THE DIM FIGURE OF A PRIEST.

"You play very nicely," said the voice. "Go on. I have enjoyed listening to you."

George turned hurriedly—his heart beating fast—to find that the person addressing him was the kindly, ruddy-faced priest who officiated at the chapel.

"I'm afraid I disturbed you, sir," he said.

"Disturbed *me*! Of course not. How could you? I came in as quietly as possible so as not to disturb *you*, my boy."

"But," stammered George, with blanched lips, "wasn't that you kneeling there, sir—near the altar?"

The priest smiled, and put his hand reassuringly on George's shoulder.

"No, I was not kneeling there. Tell me, what did you see? The figure of an old man—a priest——"

"Yes," cried George. "Did *you* see him?"

"I did not see him then, but I *have* seen him," replied the priest quietly. "You need not be afraid—he will do you no harm. Indeed, there's a saying that those who see him derive some benefit from the experience. I will tell you the story afterwards if you like. Go on playing now. You need fear nothing. I will stay with you until you have finished."

So George, much comforted, played on, and when he had done the priest accompanied them back to the Hall—for he himself had come through by the private entrance. After some talk with Mr. Lawson they left the Hall, and took the footpath leading to the farm.

"The story," said the priest, when it had been explained to Barry what George had seen, "is a very short one. About a hundred years ago the holder of the office I now fill was one Father Jacques, who was renowned for his saintly life and kind heart. When Father Jacques was an old man the baronetcy passed to a nephew, a soldier, who left the army when he succeeded to the title, came here, and quickly made himself notorious for his godlessness and evil ways. He was not of our Faith—nor, indeed, of any Faith—and it was with a grudging hand that he paid Father Jacques his tiny stipend—for it was the custom then for the priest's salary to come out of the estate. The young man's wickedness only seemed to increase as time went on, and he was even heard to declare that he was of a mind to turn the chapel into a ball-room, and send the priest packing. Being told of this, Father Jacques boldly and sternly rebuked the young man for his wickedness, and warned him that dire evil would come upon him if he did not mend his ways. Whereupon the young baronet, with an oath, declared that the old priest should never touch another penny of his, and kept his word with such obstinacy that thereafter the priest had to subsist solely upon the charity of the villagers.

"That year there was a very hard winter. The distress was sore, and the villagers were hard put to it to live themselves, much less give anything away. So the old priest grew wan and thin and weak, but his will was strong, and every day he performed his duties and visited the sick. And the weather grew colder, and the want greater, though at the Hall 'there' was feasting and revelry. At length came Christmas Eve. It was nearly midnight when Father Jacques, tottering and faint from want of food, entered the chapel and went up to the altar, there to make his obeisance to the King whose birth the morrow would celebrate. He knelt down, humbly bowing his head before the Cross. There he knelt, this old priest—his years heavy upon him, frail and weary this priest whose life had been one long act of self-sacrifice. Can you imagine anything more sublime than that bowed figure of the old priest welcoming the Lord whom he had served so faithfully. . . .

"So there he knelt. Several hours had passed by when there broke upon the holy silence rude shouts of revelry, and in the doorway of the Hall's private entrance appeared a throng of guests, flushed and reckless with wine. Of a sudden they caught sight of the kneeling figure, and an awed hush fell upon them. One approached the old priest, touched him on the shoulder, and said, 'Father, give us your blessing. 'Tis Christmas morning.' But the old priest did not move. 'Father, awake,' cried the youth who had approached—for he thought the old man had fallen asleep while he prayed. But the priest did not answer or stir, and then a strange horror seized upon the lad, and he stole back to the rest, and whispered, '*He is dead.*'

"For a moment they stood voiceless. Then they shrank back along the narrow passage, appalled, sobered, and the story goes that from that hour the young baronet turned from his evil ways and sought, all his life through, to mend the wrong he had done to the priest by works of piety and charity.

"That is the story, my boy."

George thought over the story of the old priest as he walked to business on the following morning. What had its relater said?—"*those who see him derive some benefit from the experience.*"

He wondered what benefit *he* would derive.

When he got to the office he set to work with the industry that had now become a habit with him, and Andrews, when the day's toil was over, expressed himself as well satisfied with what George had done. So George went home with a light step. He was at least earning his money.

On the following day Mr. Mappin returned from one of his frequent visits to town. Judging by his face things had not gone well with him. Very soon snappish remarks were flying about, and the clerks in the outer room were shaking in their shoes. Jones, a good clerk, was seriously thinking of looking out for another post.

So things went on, and the near approach of Christmas found Mr. Mappin in a worse mood than ever. Those who are acquainted with the type of man he belonged to will not question the probability of the situation. All his life he had had his own way; the feminine world of Mellerby had bowed down to him; he had never before known what it was to be thwarted. The blow to his self-esteem was correspondingly severe when Molly Denver showed herself to be tired of his attentions.

He looked round for an object upon which to wreak his vengeance, and his eye fell on her brother. Then he committed the meanest act of his life, and one that he lived to be sorry for—he told the boy that, after New Year's Day, his services would no longer be required by the firm of Garrick and Mappin.

(*To be continued.*)

OUR BOOK CORNER.

By Lewis Melville.

Red Cap Tales. By S. R. Crockett (Black, 6s.).—Mr. S. R. Crockett is an ardent admirer of the novels of his compatriot, Sir Walter Scott, and recently he was saddened by meeting with four children who would not read the masterpieces of his favourite author. He could not rest leaving them in such darkness, and at last an idea came to him. He picked out exciting incidents, recast them, and narrated them to the recalcitrants, "to lure them to the printed page, much as carrots are dangled before the nose of the reluctant donkey."

The experiment was successful, for Mr. Crockett records that the Scott shelf in the library has been taken by storm and escalade, being permanently gap-toothed all along the line. This is in no wise surprising. Fashions in fiction change as certainly as fashions in other spheres. The books of yesterday are not the books of to-day; and the stories which delighted our fathers and mothers are ignored by their sons and daughters. But the great masters are for all time, and the most reckless iconoclast will not dare to deprive Scott of his halo. Still, it is a fact that Scott is not read to-day with the same avidity as he was read thirty years ago- which, since we have not so many great romancers, is a pity. Mr. Crockett, therefore, is doing yeoman's service, for his book will certainly send many to the Scott shelf as surely as it sent his four young friends. He does himself less than justice, however, for he claims only to appeal to children. His cry will be heard far beyond juvenile ranks; and it will send many adults who are still young at heart back to the favourite books of their childhood. So well are the incidents selected, so admirably, so brightly are they narrated, that an hour or two may pleasurably and profitably be whiled away over this volume. Mr. Crockett has chosen to give tales from *Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, *Rob Roy*, and *The Antiquary*. Is it too much to hope that later he will send forth a book dealing with other famous Scott stories?

The Great Crib Mystery. By Tape Terrapin (Hodder, 3s. 6d.).—The majority of writers of stories for boys seem to be possessed of the idea that they must "write down" to their readers. The result, as a rule, is trash. Never was there such an erroneous theory. Think of the books boys treasure. A moment's reflection suggests a whole host of masterpieces—*Robinson Crusoe*, *Don Quixote*, *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*, *Monte Cristo*, *The Three Musketeers*, the works of Scott, Lever, Marryat, Mayne Reid, Fenimore Cooper . . . The selection has been made at random. What admirable books these are; and how a boy appreciates them and reads them over and over again! In his manhood he remembers them far more distinctly than the books he read a month ago. The characters live for him for ever; they become part of his life. The truth is, of course, that no one can write too well for boys. A good boy's book is interesting to his elders. Indeed, no father should give his son a book that he himself has not been able to read without tedium. It is wrong to give an ill-written book to a boy, for the lad is unconsciously forming his style, and is almost certain to imitate the faults of the indifferent story-monger. He who aspires to interest his juniors should choose a subject suitable for the juvenile library, and, having made this concession, should put as much work into it as if it were intended for perusal by his contemporaries.

The Great Crib Mystery is merely a boys' story that it was scarcely worth while to write. It is a tale of school life, "written down" to the supposed requirements of schoolboys. Why should a boy be spoken of slightingly, because he "knew pages ahead in his Cicero," or because "Horace was nursery rhymes to him"? Surely it is good for a boy to take an interest in his work, even as it is good for him to delight in his cricket and football. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy: all play and no work makes Jack a dull *man*. No *sensible* school-boy thinks worse of his fellow

because he devotes himself to his work. Mr Terrapin gives us a good boy who unexpectedly becomes a fighter, a liar, and eventually a burglar. Of course the good boy's motive is praiseworthy. He believes his father, the headmaster, uses a "crib" to a handbook on spherical trigonometry—an out-of-date, superseded "crib"—and that his mistakes will be brought by a rival before the Court of Directors. It would not be fair to give away more of the story, for it is certainly not the characters that have any interest. The character-drawing is, as usual in this class of book, sketchy in the extreme. The most unreal person in the story is a boy who *wants* to go to prison, because, having read a story of prison-breaking, he is anxious to have an opportunity to escape from gaol. There may be such lads; but it would be heavy odds on their "funking" the ordeal at the crucial moment. Certainly it is not a taste to be encouraged.

The Farm of the Dagger. By Eden Philpotts (Newnes, 3s. 6d.).—*The Farm of the Dagger* is a story of Dartmoor, and of two neighbouring farmers who hate each other. Roger Honeywell is a prosperous man, and in a matter of a government contract he beats his rival, John Newcombe, who loses ground as the other gains it. Honeywell gains his end by a scurvy trick, and in subsequent proceedings does not hesitate to call to his aid bribery and perjury. If he is unscrupulous, Newcombe is relentless; and the feud is waged to the bitter end. Insincere reconciliations there are, but these only add fuel to the flame; and in the last chapter Newcombe poisons Honeywell, though to effect his object he also has to drink from the poisoned cup.

The bitterness of the farmers has been aggravated by the fact that Honeywell's nephew and heir, Quinton, and Eve Newcombe, have fallen in love. The parents will not hear of such a marriage, and persuasion and threats failing of effect, Honeywell contrives by guile to separate the lovers. Quinton is compelled to take a voyage to America, and soon after Eve is told that he is dead. The shock unsettles her mind, and she tries to destroy herself.

The period of the tale is that of the great war between England and her American colonies. On Dartmoor there are vast prisons devoted to the housing of captured Americans and Frenchmen. One of these, Dan Coffin, effects an escape, and, at the moment when Eve throws herself into the river, he comes upon the scene. The rescue brought about, Coffin finds himself on the horns of a dilemma. If he leaves the girl where she is, she will again, and probably with greater success, attempt her life. If he takes her home, her family will conceive it their duty to give him back to his gaolers. Still, like the good-hearted fellow he is, he accompanies her to the farm, where, as he forboded, Newcombe is impelled reluctantly to surrender him to the soldiers. How he is rescued and enabled to return to America need not be related here.

Eve goes out of her mind through the loss of her lover; but Honeywell's heart is untouched, and he writes to tell his nephew that Eve is dead. His machinations are defeated by Coffin, who, meeting Quinton, tells him that the lass he loves still lives. So Quinton returns to England post haste, and—all's well that ends well

The Farm of the Dagger does not show Mr. Philpotts at his best. The story halts now and then, and there is a liberal use of coincident. Still, when all is said, there remains an exciting story that all may read with interest.

The Road to Manhood. By W. Beach Thomas (Allen, 6s.).—This is the latest addition to "The Young England Library," an admirable series which cannot be too highly recommended. Earlier volumes have dealt with the army, the navy, horses, guns, dogs, and many kinds of sport. *The Road to Manhood* treats principally of football, athletics, hockey, skating, gymnastics and swimming. The author, a late President of Oxford University Athletic Club, writes with authority, and has much that is interesting to say. Perhaps the most valuable chapter is that headed "Daily Training." Much is talked of training, and dietary plans without end have been put forward by "experts." Training should be nothing more nor less than a way of reaching good health; and whilst expounding this text the author states that everyone should always train, though the right sort of training won't prevent you taking chocolate, or plum pudding, or mince-pies, or muffins, and that those who are fit are always ready to do anything that may turn up. The only things that matter in the long run, he contends, are plenty of exercise and not too much to eat and drink. The entire book is written with the same good common sense. Mr. Beach Thomas writes amiably about men and things. The most severe remark he makes concerns an old schoolfellow: "I believe he would have asked 'How's that?' when he knew that the ball never touched the bat!" And who will not agree with him that the lad who, under those circumstances, would put that question, may go far, but will probably fare ill?

The Commander of the "Hirondelle." By W. H. Fitchett (Smith, Elder, and Co., 6s.).—This is an admirable book alike for young men and old. Mr. Fetchett, who is the historian of the great war with France at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, chooses as his background the earlier years of that great conflict. The book is full of stirring incidents, not introduced because a tale of adventure must contain them, but arising naturally enough out of preceding events. If a fault may be indicated it is that Lieutenant Harry Grant is too fortunate. It is true that he loses a ship, and later has his dispatches stolen from him; but even these misfortunes scarcely stay his progress. He conquers ships with the greatest ease; he disobeys admirals with impunity; he contrives, with a minimum of inconvenience to himself, and with a maximum of trouble to those who stand in his way, to obtain important papers from the enemy; and he rescues his lady-love from the hands of a sort of licensed privateer. He thinks nothing of running through the entire Spanish fleet, and gladly goes ashore at Toulon to obtain important information as to the French ships. In a word, he is always selected for the most dangerous duties, and, as a rule, is eminently successful in the discharge of his missions. It is, however, with something akin to a sense of relief that, when we reluctantly part with our hero, we take leave of *Captain* Grant. It has seemed almost inevitable that he must be an admiral. Still, Grant is a jolly good fellow brave as a lion, full of resource, and not a bit of a prig.

Mr. Fitchett introduces Sir John Jervis, whose flagship was afterwards, and under another commander, to become the most famous vessel in the British Navy past or present—the *Victory*. Nelson, too, is to be met with in these bright pages, but at a time before he had reached the zenith of his fame. If for no other reason, the book would be well worth reading for the picture of the spirit that animated officers and men in those good old days. We are shown the officers, at once prudent and dare-devilish, achieving always with the least possible risk what appears the impossible, desiring only to be allowed to take the offensive against any odds The more the merrier is also the motto of the men, who, animated with what we are pleased to call true *British* pluck, are almost angry when their junior officers employ guile to effect the conquest of a foeman's ship, having no doubt whatever that one Englishman is the match—the match, nay, the better—of five, ten, any number of foreign sailors.

We have also received copies of the following works, a selection of which will be reviewed next month :—

From Macmillan and Co. **Traffics and Discoveries,** by Rudyard Kipling (6s.); **The Ruby Ring,** by Mrs. Molesworth (4s. 6d.).

From Longmans, Green and Co.—**The Abbess of Vlaye,** by Stanley Weyman (6s.); **The Brown Fairy Book,** by Andrew Lang (6s.); **The Cruise of the "Falcon,"** by E. F. Knight (3s. 6d.).

From Grant Richards.—**Two Little Savages,** by Ernest Seton Thompson (6s. net).

From Methuen and Co.—**The Mystery of a Bungalow,** by Weathorby Chesney (6s.).

From C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd. **The Romance of Modern Locomotion,** by Archibald Williams (5s.); **The Wallypug in Fogland,** by G. E. Farrow (5s.); **Association Football,** by J. L. Jones (1s.); **Boxing,** by A. J. Newton (1s.); **Rugby Football,** by Jerome J. Rahilly (1s.).

From Ward, Lock and Co., Ltd.—**Ratapian,** by Ellen Velvin, F.Z.S. (3s. 6d.); **The Wonderful Electric Elephant,** by F. T. Montgomery (5s.); **The Thrall of Leif the Lucky,** and **The Ward of King Canute,** by O. A. Liljencrantz (5s. each).

From Thomas Nelson and Sons.—**The Phantom Spy,** by Fox Russell (2s. 6d.); **A Trusty Rebel,** by Mrs. Henry Clarke (3s. 6d.); **Highway Pirates,** by Harold Avery (3s. 6d.); **The Pirate's Hoard,** by A. Alexander (2s. 6d.)

From Ernest Nister.—**Shakespeare's Heroines,** by Mrs. Jameson (7s. 6d.); **Marcus,** by G. Manville Fenn (5s.); **With Richard the Fearless,** by Paul Creswick (3s. 6d.); **Comic Snapshots from Early English History** (1s.)

From James Nisbet and Co.—**Sons of Victory,** by O. V. Caine (5s.); **The Right o' the Line,** by R. Power Berry (3s. 6d.).

From S. W. Partridge and Co.—**To Win or to Die,** by George Manville Fenn (5s.); **True Grit,** by Harold Bindloss (2s. 6d.); **Brown, A.I.,** by E. M. Stooke (1s. 6d.); **The Pigeon's Cave,** by J. S. Fletcher (1s. 6d.).

From John F. Shaw and Co.—**Musketeer and Redskin** (3s. 6d.); **The Perils of Pekin** (3s. 6d.); **Cavaliers and Rogues** (5s.), by W. Murray Graydon.

COMPETITIONS FOR DECEMBER.

Last day for sending in, December 19th.

(Foreign and Colonial Readers, January 19th.)

NOTICE.—At the top of the first page the following particulars must be clearly written, thus :—

Competition No. ——, Class ——, Name ——,

Address ——, Age ——.

Letters to the Editor should not be sent with competitions.

We trust to your honour to send in unaided work.

GIRLS may compete, and in the event of their proving successful in competitions where cricket-bats, &c., are offered as prizes, will be allowed to select other articles of similar value.

Pages should be connected with paper-fasteners; not pins.

Write only on one side of the paper.

You may send as many "tries" for each competition as you like, but each "try" must be sent in a separately stamped envelope.

Owing to the frequency with which certain names appear in the Lists of Prize-Winners, we have decided to make a rule to the effect that a Competitor may not win more than one first prize and one consolation prize per month.

Address envelopes and postcards as follows:—Competition No. ——, Class ——, THE CAPTAIN, 12 Burleigh Street, Strand, London.

All competitions should reach us by December 19th.

The Results will be published in February.

AGE RULE: A Competitor may enter for (say) an age limit 21 competition, so long as he has not actually turned 22. The same rule applies to the other age limits.

In every case the Editor's decision is final, and he cannot enter into correspondence with unsuccessful competitors.

No. 1.—**"Famous Footballers."**—On one of our advertisement pages you will find twelve pictures. Each picture is intended to describe the name of a well-known footballer. Write in the name under each picture, fill in your name, age, class, and address, tear out the page, and post to us. Prizes: Class I., a Gradidge Football; Classes II. and III., John Piggott Hockey Sticks, two in each Class (see Prizes page).

Class and age limit as in No. 2.

No. 2.—**"A December Event."**—Write an essay, not exceeding 400 words in length, on any great event that has happened in the month of December. Neat handwriting, punctuation, and good spelling will be taken into consideration. Prizes: Class I., a Benetfink Football; Classes II. and III., a Set of Sandow Grip Dumb-bells (see Prizes page).

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Twelve.

No. 3.—**"Handwriting."**—Copy ten lines out of this number of "THE CAPTAIN." Choose the lines yourselves from whatever feature interests you most. A Half-Guinea Hobbies Fretwork Outfit will be awarded in each Class (see Prizes page).

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Twelve.

No. 4.—**"Photographic Competition."**—Send a print from your best negative. Photographs must be original, i.e., not copied from the work of others. Neatness in mounting will be taken into consideration. Prizes: Class I., a Columbia Graphophone; Classes II. and III., a "Sunny Memories" Photo. Album (see Prizes page).

Class I. ... ... No age limit.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Twenty one.
Class III. ... Age limit: Sixteen.

No. 5.—**"'Captain' Birthday Book."**—This time take the month of *April* (thirty days), and supply a suitable quotation for each day. You may obtain your quotations, poetical or prose, humorous or serious, from any source you please. Make them as varied as possible, and bear in mind the season April falls in. Remember that you are put on your honour not to copy anything out of other birthday books. Do not neglect "THE CAPTAIN" when making your choice. Prizes: Class I., a John Piggott Golf Outfit; Classes II. and III., John Piggott Hockey Sticks (two in each Class (see Prizes page).

Class I. ... ... No age limit.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-one.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.

No. 6.—**"Stamp Collectors' Competition."**—State, on a post-card, which you consider to be the six most artistic postage stamps issued for use in Great Britain and the Colonies in the order of their merit. The replies of the competitors will be tabulated as votes, which will decide the order in which the stamps shall be arranged. Prizes: Class I., a No. 2 Cistafile Outfit, value £3 3s.; Classes II. and III., a "Century" Stamp Album, value 12s. 6d. (see Prizes page).

No age limit.

FOREIGN and COLONIAL READERS are invited to compete. In their case the time limit is extended to ***January 19th.*** By "Foreign and Colonial" we refer to readers living ***outside*** Europe. There will be ***no age limit.*** One prize of 5s. will be awarded to the sender of the best entry in each competition.

"CAPTAIN" CLUB

CONTRIBUTIONS.

This part of the Magazine is set aside for Members of the CAPTAIN Club with literary and artistic aspirations. Articles, poems, etc., should be kept quite short. Drawings should be executed on stiff board in Indian ink. CAPTAIN Club contributions are occasionally used in other parts of the Magazine.

BOOKS by CAPTAIN authors are awarded to C. C-H., R. S. W., and A. F. G. Christie. Each prize-winner is requested to send his present address, and at the same time to select a book.

Japanese Schoolboys in England.

MR. E. B. CLARKE, who contributed a paragraph on "Football in Japan" to the October number, may be interested to hear that as far back as the year 1871, and for one or two subsequent seasons, a Japanese student, by name Siuji Matsuda, was a regular player of Rugby Football here in England. He was in the First Fifteen of Carshalton House School, Surrey. As a player he was always a steady, useful forward, not swift, but hard to tackle and difficult to escape.

There were several other Japanese students at Carshalton, one or two of them playing occasionally. About three years later a little Japanese boy came, and took most kindly to the game. His name was Masuda, and he was either the nephew or the adopted son of an officer of high rank in the Japanese Navy of that period. Masuda, or "the little Jap," as he was called, returned to his native land when about thirteen.

I cannot remember the names of all the Japanese who were at different times at Carshalton House, but among them were the following:—Yasi Ito, Chinaso Takahara (political student), Junketi Yamada (natural science and mathematics), Akamatz (a priest sent to study Western religions), Okura, Matsudaira (now Viscount J.), and Masakishi Ishikawa.

It is interesting to note that in 1874, or thereabouts, two Burmese played in the same team, by name Moung Bah Ohn and Moung Bah Laht. They were cousins. Both, I understand, now occupy good billets in their own land.

I enclose photographs of Matsuda and Masuda. Should this paragraph chance to meet the eye of anyone knowing the present whereabouts of my Japanese friends, I should be most glad to receive any information.

C. C-H.

MR. SIUJI MATSUDA AND MR. MASUDA.

Who played Rugby football when at school in England.

Photo. Stereoscopic Co. Photo. Elliott and Fry.

Christmas Day in New Zealand.

THE amount of literature bearing upon the time-honoured feast of Christmas, which is thrust upon a long-suffering public as the 25th of December comes round is stupendous. However, bearing in mind the fact that it is mostly written in the well-worn groove which describes frost and snow, ghosts and murders, plum puddings and the "Yule log," it may be somewhat refreshing to hear how I spent Christmas a year or two ago in this distant corner of our vast Empire.

Lying between my cosy blankets my drowsy brain was wakened to the fact that day was at hand by hearing the prosaic crowing of the farmyard "rooster." Luxuriously turning myself over, I glanced at the window, which framed a most delightful picture of blue sky and trees just touched with the rose-tint of the rising sun. I hastily donned my clothes, threw a towel over my neck and was away through the dewy grass towards the river, breathing in the sweet freshness of the early morning air. The trees surrounding the house seemed alive with birds chanting their morning hymns, the flute-like note of the tui mingling pleasantly with homely trills of blackbirds and thrushes, while high overhead the larks were singing merrily, as though they knew it was Christmas. Ah! What a refreshing plunge in the clear crystal waters which have come babbling through miles of the most beautiful woodland scenery, from the cold glaciers of Mount Egmont. A good rub down and the rapidly rising sun soon put warmth into my limbs again, and I was ready for a little trout fishing. Taking my rod, I was soon trying my favourite pools, and before eight o'clock I was trudging home with eight beauties averaging over a pound apiece. What rapture to hear them hissing in the frying pan, well coated with bread crumbs! After this toothsome breakfast the morning was spent lying at full length in the long grass beneath the shade of a tree reading Tennyson or being lulled to sleep by the drowsy hum of myriads of insects. Then came lunch with its inevitable plum pudding, somewhat of an ordeal on a hot day. Afterwards into the saddle and away to wish our neighbours a merry Christmas. Everywhere one met cheery faces and the usual greeting, and it was with a feeling of great content that I rode back along the dusty road, musing the while somewhat sadly that the sun which was setting with such quiet beauty would soon rise on the dear ones at home, but to light such a different day to that which I had just experienced.

GERALD ALLHUSEN.

TARANAKI, NEW ZEALAND.

Balancing a Pencil on a Match.

OPEN a penknife, and force the point of the blade into the pencil about an inch from the sharpened end. Place the point of the pencil on the match. If sufficient care is taken in adjusting the penknife, the pencil will not only stand, but it will be found quite a difficult matter to displace it.

THIS IS A SIMPLE EXPERIMENT, BUT IT CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES THE LAW THAT GOVERNS THAT MYSTERIOUS FORCE, GRAVITY.
By Arthur Combe.

Ghosts.

BY ONE WHO DOESN'T BELIEVE IN THEM.

THE majority of people nowadays do not believe in ghosts—why, they cannot tell you. I myself do not believe in ghosts, but I have my reasons. That ghosts are impossible may be proved by science. A ghost must be made of matter, or else it could not select light, and so you would not be able to see it. And if it is matter, how could it possibly pass through walls and doors, or disappear and appear at random. As a rule, a ghost clanks chains and taps at doors, and its footsteps are clearly audible; to do this some energy must be used, and there must be some matter to use the energy, or, to say it more simply, the ghost must be substantial. Most

ghost stories can be explained with a little thinking out. I give a few examples. King's School, Canterbury, was for several years supposed to be haunted. The figure of a man used to be seen at regular intervals in a corridor. Many persons saw it, and they all thought it was a ghost, but it was afterwards proved to be the light of the moon casting the shadow of a stained glass window on the opposite wall. There is a man who is fond of ghosts, or ghosts of him, for he has seen no less than three. On one occasion an Irish girl came and played a harp and sang to him, and then vanished, a thing quite impossible for a ghost to do, since it cannot make noises. Another man once, in crossing a lonely moor, found himself followed by what was apparently a footpad. He hurried on and suddenly the man disappeared. When he had gone another hundred or so yards he turned back to see if the footpad was still following him, and he saw a tall white pillar, which gradually turned into a man. The gentleman heard later on that four years before a footpad had hanged himself on the moor, and concluded that the figure he saw was a ghost. I don't see why the footpad could not have been a real one, just because one had hanged himself before on that moor. And he certainly possessed no ghostly characteristics. One can easily imagine the feelings of the man when he was followed by the footpad, and that his nerves would be strung up to a very high pitch, and it is unlikely that the second vision was more or less than smoke from a fire which the tramp had lit. The next is of a different sort. A gentleman was staying at a friend's house, and one night went to bed at about 12 p.m., very tired, but, strangely enough, could not go to sleep. Suddenly he was startled by the sound of footsteps and the clanking of chains. Soon after that he went to sleep. On the next night he again heard the footsteps and clanking of chains. On the next day he told his friend, with whom he was staying, who said sounds had been often heard before in that room, but nothing ever seen. A few years later it was found, while the chimney of the house was being mended, that in the chimney a chain hung loose, which, when the wind blew down, rattled, and made the noise of chains clanking. Many ghosts are purely hoaxes. But the majority may be accounted for like those I have dealt with.

R. S. W.

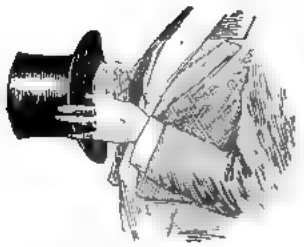
[Of course, ghosts cannot be explained by science, because science deals with only what is to be actually known. Ghosts belong to the supernatural, which science cannot explain, and, therefore, won't acknowledge. It is very easy to explain certain ghost stories away, as R. S. W. has done in this essay, but how about the many thousands that have never been explained away? I have never seen a ghost, but I believe in the supernatural, and in supernatural appearances. Science only deals with what man's puny brain can master, and what is man's brain compared with the Omnipotent Force that controls the universe?—O. F.]

JAMES BRAID, OF WALTON HEATH, DRIVING.
Photo. A. F. G. Christie.

Two Christmas Illusions.

MOST CAPTAIN Clubites have at one time or another watched with much wonderment a conjurer apparently cook an omelette in a "topper," but few doubtless have any idea as to how the trick is really accomplished.

A large, well-baked cake, made to resemble an omelette, is concealed between the shirt-front and waistcoat, and deftly placed into the hat—a borrowed one, usually—in the manner shown in the accompanying sketch. Four eggs, the contents of three of which have been removed through a tiny hole in the shells, are placed on a plate. The conjurer splits one of the empty eggs on the edge of the plate, and pretends to empty its contents into the hat. The perfect egg is then picked up and accidentally dropped. It smashes, and this has the effect of making the audience believe that all the eggs are genuine. The remaining two



SECRETING THE "OMELETTE."

are treated in the same way as the first, and after the hat has been held over a lighted candle the supposed omelette is taken out and exhibited to the astonished gaze of the spectators.

ORANGE PYROTECHNICS

The second illusion is more simple, and consists merely in squeezing the juice from a piece of an orange into the flame of a candle. The spray burns, and miniature explosions are produced, which help to impress on the audience your remark to the effect that there are fireworks in an orange.

ST. IVEL.

Submarines, Old and New.

ALTHOUGH the submarine boat is generally supposed to be a very modern invention, this is really not the case. As far back as 1602 a Dutchman, Cornelius van Drebble, constructed a submarine propelled by eight rowers, and holding a few passengers. He successfully navigated this boat under the Thames from Westminster to Greenwich. The next submarine boat actually built was designed by Mr. Day, an Englishman, but it was a complete failure.

In 1775, during the American War of Independence, David Bushnell, an American, invented a submarine boat (Fig. 1) for destroying the British warships. It held one man, and the propellers were worked by hand. Over the rudder was a mine, containing 150 lbs. of gunpowder, which could be detached from the inside. No damage, however, was done to our ships by this invention.

Coming down to more recent times, about 1878 M. Goubet, a well-known French inventor, built his first submarine (Fig. 5). It was driven by electricity, and carried one torpedo.

In 1894 Mr. Lake, of Baltimore, U.S.A., built a submarine (Fig. 3) for searching sunken wrecks, &c. It ran along the ocean bed on spiked wheels, and Mr. Lake travelled over 1,000 miles under the sea in it, searching many wrecks.

Two years later Mr. Temple built a small hull of aluminium, with a diving suit attached. Inside the latter a man was fastened, and he propelled the boat by means of a bicycle crank and pedals, receiving air from the hull (Fig. 2).

In 1901 the United States submarine *Shark* was launched (Fig. 4). She is of the *Holland* type, sixty feet long by twelve feet beam. Her speed is eight knots, and she carries both Whitehead and aerial torpedoes.

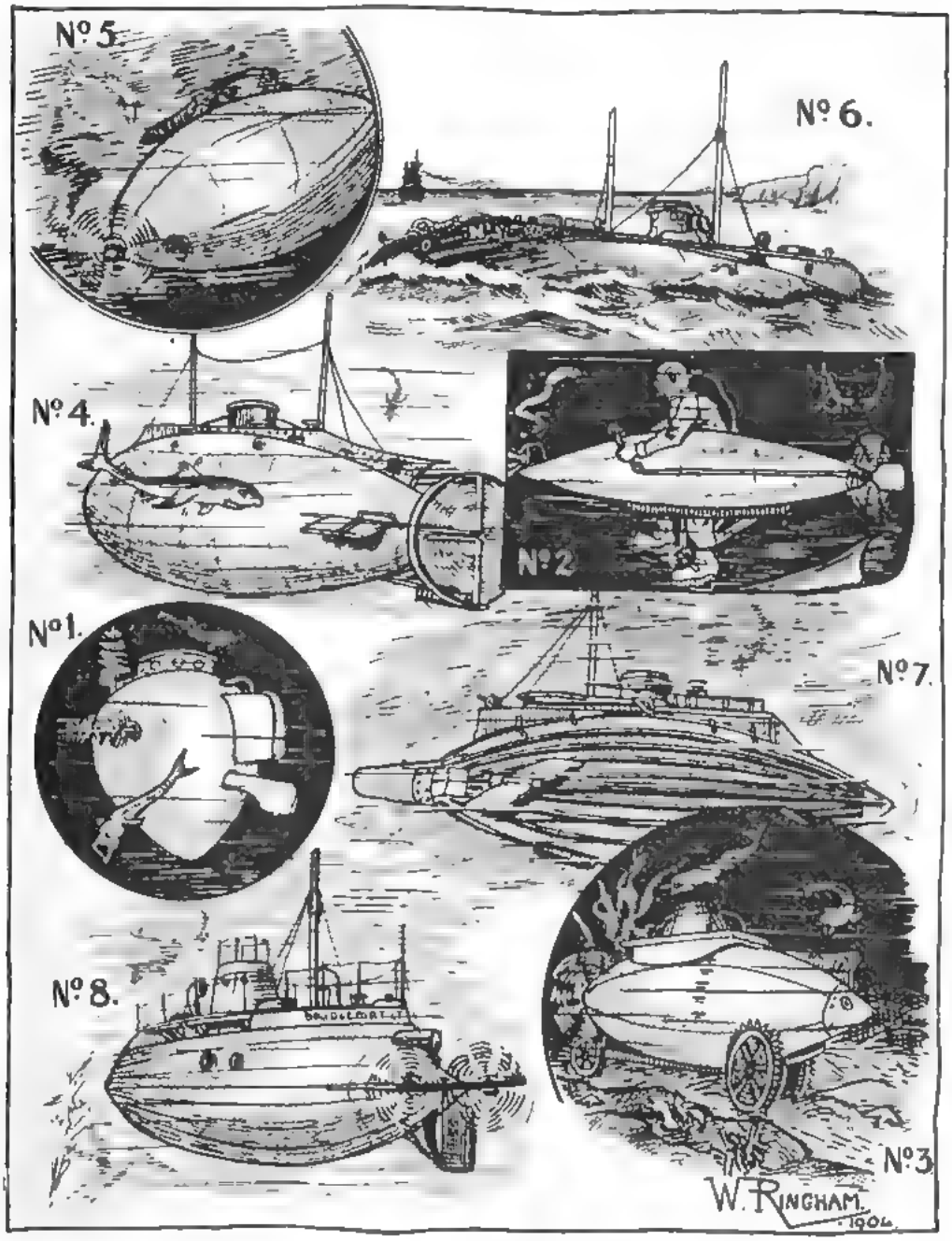
Fig. 6 shows the British submarine, No. 3. She carries five torpedoes, and has a speed of seven knots.

The strange craft shown in Fig. 7 is the invention of a German officer. It is driven by electricity, and carries one torpedo tube.

Fig. 8 shows a very novel type of submarine, recently launched in the United States, called the *Protector*. She has twin screws, has a speed of seven knots, and carries three torpedo tubes. She can be fitted with wheels, to run along the ocean bed, pick up cables, &c.

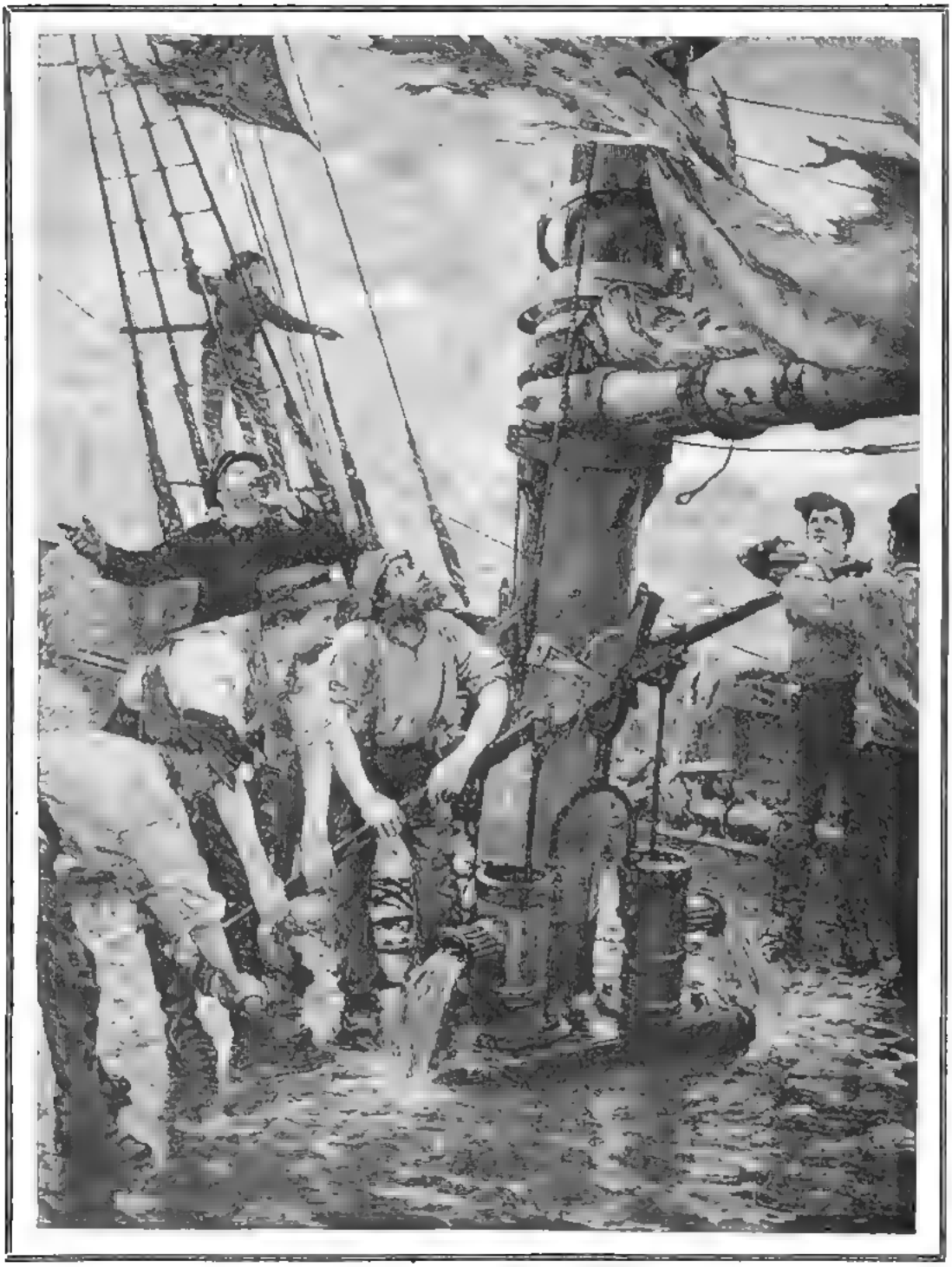
Recent trials of submarines seem to have been very successful, and the great difficulties of submarine navigation are rapidly being overcome; but it yet remains to be seen what part submarine boats will be able to take in actual warfare. Even if they do not altogether alter present naval tactics, they are sure to prove deadly enemies to all battleships, and there will be little difficulty in laying mines, cutting cables, &c., with these wonderful boats.

WILLIAM RINGHAM.

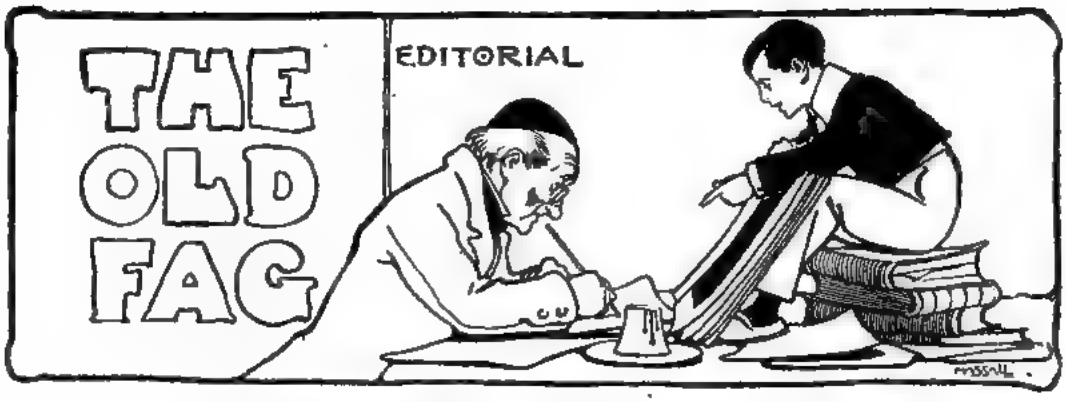


SUBMARINES, OLD AND NEW.

Fig. 1. David Bushnell's Submarine, 1775.
Fig. 2. Mr. Temple's naval invention, 1896.
Fig. 3. Treasure Hunting Submarine, 1894.
Fig. 4. United States Submarine, *Shark*, 1901.
Fig. 5. M. Goubet's first Submarine, 1879.
Fig. 6. British Submarine, "No. 3."
Fig. 7. New German Submarine.
Fig. 8. U.S.A. Submarine, *Protector*.



ALL HANDS TO THE PUMPS.
From the painting by H. S. Tuke.



12 BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND, LONDON.

TO ALL READERS A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

Here we are with our Sixth Christmas Number, and going stronger than ever, I am glad to say. The loyalty of all my readers, apart altogether from a business point of view, has always been very gratifying to me, and I do not think that any editor has ever had a more faithful band of adherents than my crew of Captainites. . . . Really, I feel rather like an old gentleman making a speech at a public dinner—who has a great many things to say, but doesn't exactly know how to say them. Perhaps, before going any further, I had better apologise to the numerous correspondents whose letters I have not yet acknowledged. I hope to put in a good batch of "Answers" next month, so I beg all who have written in to have patience with me till our next number appears.

Now then, let's take a general look at things. I think this past year has been characterised largely by an absence of grumblers, and that is because the majority of you recognise that we make the most of our space and endeavour to insert features which will please the greater number. That is what every editor has to do. It is all very well for one reader to write and say that he would like us to have Irish football notes, for another to suggest that we insert a series of articles on fret-work, and a third that he would like us to publish an article showing up the present inefficiency of the Navy—which is what a correspondent, in an earnest four-paged letter, recently urged me to do. Plainly, we have little room for thee things. Our magazine must consist mainly of fiction. The rest of our space must be devoted to articles on pastimes and the most popular hobbies, such as stamp collecting and camera work. It would not do to have nothing but fiction, and it would not do to have nothing but articles; so we try to strike the happy medium. With this number we start a new feature in the shape of book reviews. In future issues we shall review a larger number of books, and the notices of them will be shorter than those appearing in the present issue. A big stack of handsomely bound books awaits our reviewer's attention, and I have asked him to make a point of encouraging young writers of promise. The men of firmly established reputations will, of course, receive the notice that is their due as popular caterers for the public, but we shall also endeavour to give struggling writers a leg-up if their work strikes us as being really meritorious.

Curiously enough, there has been a sort of epidemic of illness among CAPTAIN artists. Mr. Hawley, Mr. Whitwell, Mr. Skinner, and Mr. E. S. Hodgson, have all been docked for repairs; but they are all, I believe, fit and well again now. The most curious illness was that of Mr. E. S. Hodgson, to whom we entrusted the illustrations of that extraordinarily thrilling tale, "The Passage of the Styx." Mr. Hodgson had got to work on the pictures and had half finished them, when, while making some purchases at the shop of an artists' colourman in the Strand, he broke a blood vessel and had to be conveyed to a hospital.

After he had been attended to he insisted on getting up and going home, and directly he got home he sat down and completed the powerful pictures with which the story in question is embellished. The tale had taken such a hold of him that he couldn't rest until he had fulfilled his part of it. I am sure you will all agree with me that it was very plucky of him to have stuck to the work in face of such a serious physical mishap. His will seems to be as strong as his work, which occupies a deservedly high place in the present day world of black-and-white art.

What Girls Read. I have on several occasions seen correspondence in the Press on the subject of girls' literature. It seems that a good many schoolmistresses and parents are rather bothered as to what they ought to allow their pupils and daughters, respectively, to read. From what I have observed in the course of numerous visits to houses where there are girls of the ordinary healthy type, girls, like boys, prefer literature of an exciting description. That is why girls read boys' papers and boys' books. But there are exceptions—as, for instance: I once asked a girl of twelve what sort of books she liked to read. I thought she would say either novels (for the modern girl is rather progressive) or boys' books. Instead of which, she replied with perfect frankness, "*I like books with murders in them.*" Well, of course, the shedding of blood has a great attraction for the human race. Look at the works of Homer and Rider Haggard, and think of the amount of blood that is spilt in the pages of those authors. Still, it is not a very refined taste for a girl to have, nor yet a very feminine one, but this girl-friend of mine spoke her mind about the matter, and I admired her for doing that. Girls, I repeat, are fond of exciting stories, and it is quite possible to cater for them in a way which will satisfy their craving for excitement and at the same time do them no harm. Ladies who write stories for girls do their very best in this respect, but they are circumscribed and fettered in writing books about girls for girls. A large number of girls' books are written every year, and of course they are bought and read, otherwise they would not be published, but I am sure the majority of girls read books which are not specially written for them, and really I do not see any harm at all in a girl reading a well-written, healthy boys' book. A good boys' book teaches a boy to be manly, modest, and chivalrous. It is possible to teach all that in the form of a rattling yarn, and girls reading such books can enjoy themselves thoroughly and at the same time apply such teachings to themselves. There is a great deal of spitefulness and meanness in the dealings of quite nice girls with one another, and these story-books and magazines for boys can do a lot of good in showing girls how very *little* it is to be spiteful or mean, or to tell tales.

As chance has it, a letter has just reached me from a girl-reader which, while discussing girls' friendships, touches on this very spitefulness, so existent among girls, to which I have referred above. Says my correspondent:—

"According to my brother, boys' friendships are very different to those of girls. I have found that girls seem to put their friends on a sort of pedestal (I am speaking of *real* friends), and adore them from beneath it, expecting everything and giving nothing in the way of self-sacrifice, &c. Somehow, a girl will imagine her friend to be a 'paragon of all the virtues,' and how absurd it is when they will keep on in that silly way! There is not one girl in ten but says to her chum, 'I am sure you like So-and-so more than you do me.' If the chum is feeling a bit 'ratty' she will get cross and a row starts at once. Pride steps in, and by a few silly, thoughtless words the friendship of perhaps years is severed. Now, a boy seems to put up with so much more, and to recognise and tolerate his chum's weaknesses and faults. A boy, too, will stick up so tremendously for his friend against any nasty slander that may crop up, whilst a girl is ready to listen to any mean story that some mischief-making person delights in telling her, and is the first to turn on her erstwhile friend with 'I thought as much,' or some such virtuous phrase."

My correspondent writes in altogether too wholesale a fashion about girls turning on their friends after hearing stories about them. I am sure there are plenty of girls who stick up for their friends as loyally as boys do. Still, I think that the reading of healthy boys' literature should do a great deal in eradicating meanness from a girl's character, and so I say let girls read boys' books by all means. At the same time, they should not avoid the really good books that are written for girls. I believe Mrs. Meade has written some very good books for girls, although I have never read any of them. Miss Rosa N. Carey and Miss Evelyn Everett Green are also very sound writers for girls, I am told, and I have no

doubt that there are many others. But, naturally, I know more about books that are intended for the male side of the family.

What set me talking on this subject was a letter which appeared in the *Daily Mail* for October 22nd. It ran as follows:

WHAT GIRLS READ.

To the Editor of the "Daily Mail."

SIR,—I think THE CAPTAIN a hundred times more sensible and much funnier than either the *Girl's Own Paper* or the *Girl's Realm*, though I am

A SCHOOLGIRL.

A friend of mine laughingly inquired whether *I* had sent the letter, evidently thinking that I had been employing a rather smart dodge for giving THE CAPTAIN an advertisement. I told him, of course, that I had had nothing whatever to do with the letter. I was not aware that such a correspondence was going on in the *Daily Mail* until this letter was cut out and sent to me. Well, I am very much obliged to this schoolgirl for her pleasing testimonial, but, while appreciating it very much, I must add that I think this young lady hardly does justice to the popular periodicals she mentions in her letter. The *Girl's Own Paper* and the *Girl's Realm* are excellently edited magazines, containing heaps that is interesting to girls from cover to cover, and touching on a host of feminine interests such as are, of course, entirely absent from the pages of THE CAPTAIN. Naturally, our friend wrote with girlish enthusiasm. Though delighted to number such a staunch supporter amongst our readers, I think, at the same time, that credit should be given where credit is due, and I am sure the very highest credit is due to the conductors of the *Girl's Own Paper* and the *Girl's Realm* for the many features of interest which characterise the columns of those journals.

'Orkins Anecdotes:—No doubt many of you have read extracts from the recently-published *Reminiscences of Sir Henry Hawkins, Baron Brampton*. The book appears to me brimful of good tales. I have not read it myself, but "L. F. A.'s" excellent review in the *Chronicle* gives me a chance of quoting one or two plums from this seasonable literary pudding. One of the best tales concerns a judge, who, having to sentence sixteen men to death in the good old times when prisoners were polished off in batches, read the names of only fifteen. When the error was pointed out, the sixteenth man received sentence in these terms:—

"John Robins, I find I have accidentally omitted your name on my list of prisoners doomed to execution. It was quite accidental, I assure you, and I ask your pardon for my mistake. I am very sorry, and can only add that you will be hanged with the rest."

When he was at the Bar this famous judge had a dramatic manner which proved highly effectual. He distinguished himself greatly in the Tichborne case. All sorts of celebrities attended the trial at various times, Toole, the great comedian, being one of them.

"One day when Mr. Toole sat next to Mr. Hawkins in Court, the Claimant was heard to mutter, 'There's Toole come to learn actin' from 'Arry Orkins.' When a lady presented him with a tract entitled 'Sinner, Repent!' he wrote on it, 'Surely this must have been meant for Orkins, not for me!'"

Hawkins was renowned for his criminal work. All the burglars knew him. "That's 'im!' they used to say to each other when brought into court to be tried, "That's 'Orkins!" If he was defending them they stood a good chance of getting off; if prosecuting, a still better one of being convicted. Once he was successful in obtaining an acquittal for a gentleman in a velveteen suit accused of burglary. The acquitted one, filled with gratitude, said to his counsel: "Would a teapot be of any use to you, Mr. Orkins? Yes, sir, or a few silver spoons—anything you like to name, Mr. Orkins."

Sir Henry was in every way a splendid judge; he had a name for severity, but he knew when to be merciful. For instance, a convict had a mouse in his cell which he had tamed, and one day a prison warder killed it, whereupon the convict attacked the warder with a dinner knife, and was indicted for attempting to murder. On the ground that the convict had acted on a sudden impulse, in "great and not unnatural excitement," Sir Henry ordered his acquittal.

These "Reminiscences" have been edited by Mr. Richard Harris, K.C., who appears to have done his work exceptionally well.

THE OLD FAG.

Results of October Competitions.

No. I.—"Initials which make Syllables."

CLASS I. (No Age Limit.)

WINNERS OF "SUNNY MEMORIES" PHOTOGRAPH ALBUMS: Osmund P. Abey, 17 St. Barnabas road, Sheffield; W. A. Oldfield, York City and County Bank, Doncaster.

HONOURABLE MENTION: H. McGregor, Kirby Busfield, E. Cossart, Charles Read, Helen C. Tancock, M. Oakley, Constance Measery, B. F. Duckham.

CLASS II. (Age limit, Twenty-one.)

WINNERS OF PHOTOGRAPH ALBUMS: G. W. Bailey, 396 Attercliffe road, Sheffield; Kate Perrin, Sudbury Court, Harrow.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Helen Goring, E. T. Walburn, Walter Rosser, Minnie Bowker, Gordon Tucker, Bernard E. Jull, John Morris, T. Thomson.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNERS OF PHOTOGRAPH ALBUMS: W. Spencer Leeming, 69 Arbuthnot road, New Cross, S.E.; Charles Allcock, Boure House, Knighton, Rads.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Frederick F. Wise, Thomas Owen, Kirby Busfield, B. C. Bessell, Thomas Cooke, Meta Sinclair, Percy W. Sadler.

No. II.—"An October Event."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty one.)

WINNER OF GAMAGE FOOTBALL: P. E. Petter, Broad Park, Ilfracombe.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Richmond Williams, "Hazelbeach," North End Grove, Portsmouth; Mawgan Fremlin, 9 Mount Ephraim, Tunbridge Wells.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Gladys von Stralendorff, Ernest John Lavell, Hugh F. Walker, D. Buckwell, Charles H. Stonham, Ernest Wharrier-Soulsby, Robt. Layfield, Marian Hewitt, Kate Perrin.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF GAMAGE FOOTBALL: Joan Margaret Key, "Claigmar," Church End, Finchley.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Thomas Cooke, 35 Dudley Drive, Hyndland, Glasgow; Leonard A. Pavey, 10 Edith road, Plashet Grove, East Ham, E.

HONOURABLE MENTION: P. R. Laird, Jas. G. Innes, J. J. Sheil, George A. White, F. B. Sadler, Graham O. Gunn, Mabel Adair, W. Spencer Leeming, Fred C. Wild, William H. Harford, B. F. Lawrance, Arnold Rogers, William M. Marshall, Lilian M. Hunter.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNER OF GAMAGE FOOTBALL: R. J. Evans, 77 High street, Bridgnorth, Salop.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Jack Mellor, C. F. R. Pells, Leonard Barker, Charles T. Ramsden.

No. III.—"Famous Men."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty one.)

WINNERS OF "FAMILY" PRINTING OUTFITS: Randolph Pawlby, 12 Maida Vale-terrace, Plymouth; J. B. Atkinson, The Mount, Pontefract, Yorks.

HONOURABLE MENTION: P. E. Potter, S. W. Williams, W. J. Juleff, Thomas Bones, George Toulmin, G. H. Pearson, J. D. Stewart, Ernest H. Vincent, W. G. Sherlock, C. Duncan.

CLASS II. (Age limit, Sixteen.)

WINNERS OF "FAMILY" PRINTING OUTFITS: G. C. Maclaran, Hollowmead, Bishopsteignton, S. Devon; Thomas Owen, 235 Marshalls Cross road, St. Helens, Lancs.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE HAS BEEN AWARDED TO: R. H. Bagshaw, 4 Ash grove, Headingley, Leeds.

HONOURABLE MENTION: C. D. Cooper, Audrey Howard, Arthur Ridpath, Charles W. Skafte, E. Walford Lloyd, B. Woodmansee, A. R. Burnett-Hurst, M. W. Hooker, Bert Pepper, Stanley W. Grise, Harold W. Hensman.

CLASS III. (Age limit, Twelve.)

WINNERS OF "FAMILY" PRINTING OUTFITS: Frank Thorne, South street, Epsom; Edmund Rhodes, 20 Thornes-road, Liverpool.

HONOURABLE MENTION: H. W. Turner, Frank Harris, Arthur Snape, R. J. Evans, R. H. Trott, Reggie Bloom.

No. IV. "Photographic Competition."

CLASS I. (No Age Limit.)

WINNER OF "SWAN" FOUNTAIN PEN: H. W. Witcombe, Castlebrook, Holland road, Maidstone.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: E. Courtman, Denford House, Atkins-road, Clapham Park, S.W.; T. E. W. Strong, Windhill Vicarage, Shipley, Yorks.; R. W. Copeman, The Union, Wincanton, Bath.

HONOURABLE MENTION: E. S. Maples, T. H. Jones, Nina M. Tancock, Bert Price, H. J. Brougo, Arthur J. Court, A. E. Radford, J. P. Howlett, W. Bagshaw, Constance M. Daly, William P. Pollock, J. Marshall Hewitt.

CLASS II. (Age limit, Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF "SWAN" FOUNTAIN PEN: J. B. Meldrum, Eversley, Durham road, Bowdon.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Alex. P. Cook, 108 Mayfair-avenue, Ilford, Essex; G. S. B. Cushnie, 183 Grove-street, Liverpool; A. F. Minchin, Lansdown, Bath.

HONOURABLE MENTION: J. Bannerman, jun., A. Mattinson, W. Gundry, jun., Margaret A. Hicks, Harry Middleton, E. G. Caldeleugh, W. R. Sutton, W. H. S. Griffiths, S. Morris, W. O. Morris, Jessie E. Witney, J. H. Young.

CLASS III. (Age limit, Sixteen.)

WINNER OF "SWAN" FOUNTAIN PEN: Charles W. Dockerill, 57 Roland road, Handsworth, Birmingham.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: N. V. Roby, 13 Chatsworth road, Brondesbury, N.W.; William G. Briggs, 80 Reedworth street, Kennington, S.E.

HONOURABLE MENTION: R. E. Powell-Higgins, G. M. Eaton, E. A. Green, Harold Brunskill, Alfred W. Butt, H. S. Richards, P. Gardner Smith, S. B. Kekewich, Dorothy Scrivener, L. Steele, Reginald C. Kershaw.

No. V.—"Queer Surnames."

CLASS I. (No Age Limit.)

WINNER OF BENETFINK FOOTBALL: R. H. Oakley, Shireland, Poppleton, York.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Mary E. Cooke, Helen C. Tancock, H. McGregor, L. Beedham, Mrs. George McLean, H. W. Hirst, Jas. J. Nevin, Winifred Horle, Rhoda Hickson, William Oliver.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF BENETFINK FOOTBALL: Lionel H. Woods, 33 Connaught road, Harlesden, N.W.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE HAS BEEN AWARDED TO: Marion Michie, Harewood Lodge, South Norwood Park, S.E.

HONOURABLE MENTION: John M. Edgar, V. Mary Wilson, F. Reid, Fred Hill, William A. Oldfield, Ethel Sadler, Joe Taylor, Gertrude Persse, H. Walter Parkes, Herbert W. Quicke, Evelyn Byrde.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: Nannie Griffin, 42 Palmerston road, co. Dublin.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: C. Weston, 71 St. Albans road, Seven Kings, Ilford, Essex; Willie Middleton, 1 Heath Bank road, Cheadle Heath.

HONOURABLE MENTION: E. A. S. Fox, D. Deighton, Archie Kates, A. Wycherley, G. Fernbusch, C. G. Moody, Maurice Adair, H. Oxley, W. Spencer Leeming, V. H. Nishigawa, E. F. Lawrence, H. H. Harman, H. B. Peach.

No. VI.—"Derivations."

CLASS I. (No Age Limit.)

WINNER OF BOOKS TO THE VALUE OF TEN SHILLINGS: Edward Colston Parry, Merlin Villa, 397 Fishponds road, Bristol.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: H. McGregor, Sussex Lodge, Worthing; L. M. Snow, "Camden Rise," Chislehurst, Kent.

HONOURABLE MENTION: S. Cooke, W. Turton, O. C. Lupton, W. Weatherby, Elsie A. Knight, Elsie J. Dunkerley, May McOwen Hull, Eleanor V. Taylore, Ernest Wharrier-Soulsby.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

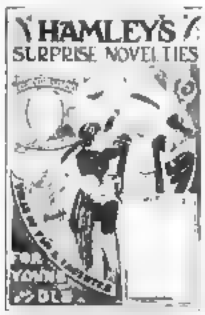
WINNER OF BOOKS TO THE VALUE OF TEN SHILLINGS: Colin Tremaine Wright, 57 Gladstone avenue, Wood Green, N.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Leonard A. Jones, 233 Plymouth-grove, Manchester; Edward Henry Mnish, "Sorrento," Cotham Lawn road, Bristol.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Maurice R. Ridley, Alfred C. Duncan, Gilbert T. Lucas, Gwendolen Roupell, Constance M. Miller, W. Spencer Leeming, Edith Noel Knox, Arthur W. Lough, Esther M. Bell, G. I. Wagstaff.

Winners of Consolation Prizes are requested to inform the Editor which they would prefer—a volume of the "Captain," "Strand," "Sunday Strand," "Wide World," "Technics," "C. B. Fry's Magazine," or one of the following books—"Jim Mortimer, Surgeon," "J. O. Jones," "Tales of Greyhouse," "Acton's Feud," "The Heart of the Prairie."

HAMLEY'S NOVELTIES.



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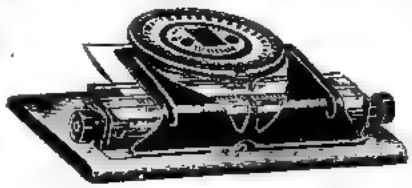

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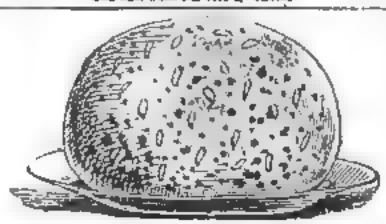

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A brilliant Stone Pin, Owl's Head, Cow's Head, or Skeleton's Head.

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Marvellous Diver, goes under Water.

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A Great Novelty and Joke. A paper cup is inserted inside, and when the top is pressed it goes off with a loud report, causing much laughter.

Price 6d.; Post Free, 8d.

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By pressing the bottom a spring jumps up, causing much astonishment and laughter.

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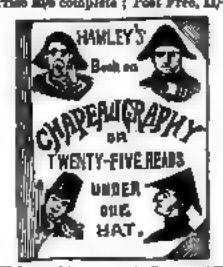

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Fitted on polished Wood Box with Nickel Base with reversible lid enabling Phonograph to be packed inside the box.

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Edison Bell Cylinders for the above. Comic Songs. Recitations, Bands, &c. Price 1/-. Post Free, 1/3.

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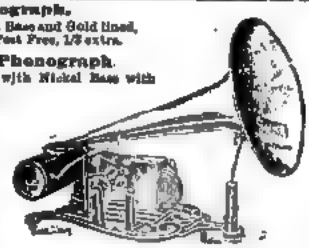
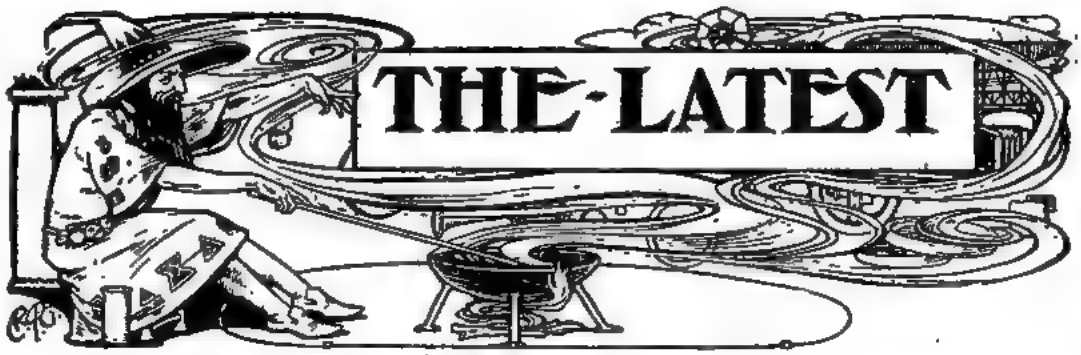
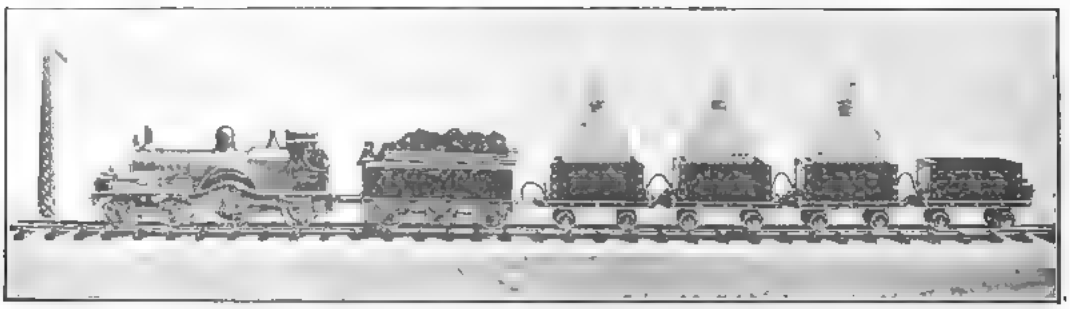


HAMLEY'S BRANCHES { 512 & 510a OXFORD ST., W. (Marble Arch); 64 & 65 REGENT ST., W. (Piccadilly Circus); 59 KNIGHTSBRIDGE, S.W. (near Albert Gate); 35 NEW OXFORD ST., W.C., Conjuring and Entertainments; 231 HIGH HOLBORN, W.C., Conjuring and Fancy Goods; 86 & 87 HIGH HOLBORN, W.C., Wholesale and Retail. } LONDON.

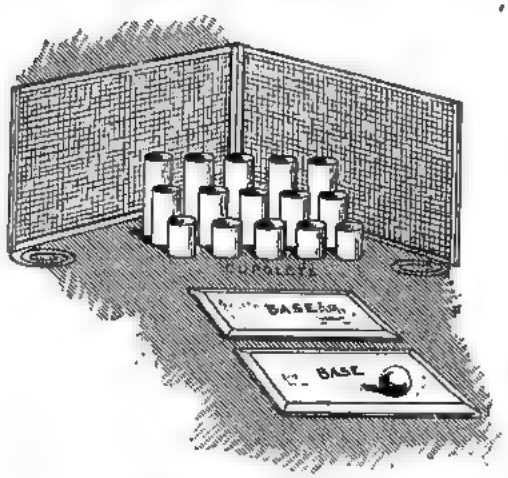




A MODEL TRAIN WHICH RUNS ROUND A DINNER TABLE.

A Railway for the Dinner Table.

It is not often one finds a really great engineering firm turning their attention to model making, but in the case of the railway train pictured on this page, the well-known British engineering firm, Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth and Co., famous the world over for dock-gates, bridges, &c., have brought all their skill to bear in making an ingenious model of a railway train to carry a load of liquor and cigars round a gentleman's dinner table after dessert. The motive power used is electricity.



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A Game for Christmas.

"Bounceola" is certainly one of the most exciting indoor games ever invented, and there is plenty of room for skilful play in making the balls bounce into the most desirable "cupolets," as shown in our illustration. "Bounceola" has been patented by Messrs. E. Newington and Co., 57, Berners-street, London, W., and may be obtained of any toy-dealer, price 10s. 6d.

Clark's College.

We publish herewith a small portrait of Mr. George E. Clark, who, in 1880, founded the now famous Clark's College. It was the pioneer of those institutions where one may obtain specialised training for examinations at a reasonable cost. The college is situated at 1, 2, and 3, Chancery-lane, London, and, besides being of great service to students in the Metropolis, by a carefully elaborated and up-to-date scheme of postal tuition, CAPTAIN readers resident in any British colony may at a very moderate outlay become "correspondence" students. Special

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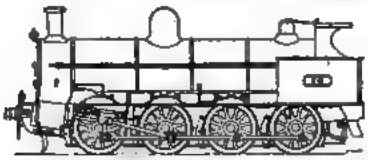

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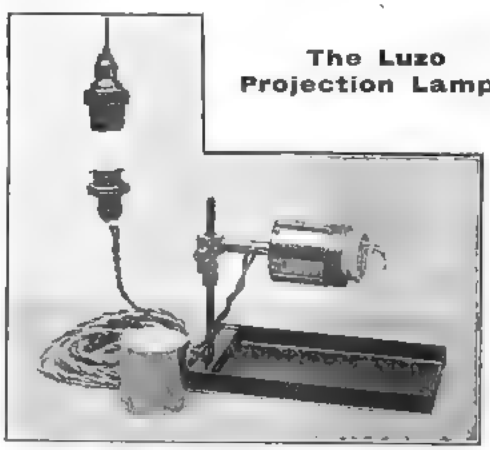
arrangements have recently been made for postal instruction throughout South Africa.

THE LATEST IN CRACKERS.

Tom Smith's Crackers.

The cracker is one of those things inseparably associated with Christmas merriment, and the name of Tom Smith is inseparably associated with the Christmas cracker. His crackers are British-made by British labour, and contain, besides grotesque and amusing headdresses, thousands of miniature novelties collected from all parts of the world. Moreover, in Tom Smith's crackers the mottoes or verses are all charming and graceful compositions by well-known authors. By a special process of manufacture the failure of the crackers when pulled is rendered practically impossible. So many new designs and novelties have been introduced for the coming Christmas season that it would be impossible even to mention them all here. We are enabled, however, to reproduce in black and white the cover of the latest cracker novelty—"Tom Smith's Marconi Messages."



ELECTRIC LAMP FOR MAGIC LANTERNS.

A novel and useful electric lamp for photographic enlargement work, or magic lantern entertainments, has just been introduced by Messrs. H. J. Redding and Co., of Argyle-street, Regent-street. It is so designed that it may be fixed on to any electric light installation at a moment's notice. Compressed gas has hitherto always been a dangerous element in a magic lantern display, but with this lamp, which gives a light of from 50 to 80 candle power, all risk of explosion is abolished.

Comments on the October Competitions.

No. I.—A large number of "initials which make syllables" were sent in. The winning list in Class III. is as follows:—

1. Sir John Everett Millais = J E M.
2. William Hillier Onslow = W H O.
3. Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan = A S S.
4. M. A. Noble = M A N.
5. Sir Henry Enfield Roscoe = H E R.
6. Cyril Arthur Pearson = C A P.
7. Alfred George Edwards = A G E.
8. Sir George Otto Trevelyan = G O T
9. Rev. Joseph Armitage Robinson = J A R.
10. Sir Edward Richard Russell = E R R.
11. George Adolphus Story = G A S.
12. Charles Algernon Whitmore = C A W.

No. II.—A most popular and interesting competition, but, unfortunately, quite a large number in Classes II and III. were disqualified, owing to their having failed to notice the age limits. The chief subjects chosen for essays were:—The Battles of Hastings, Trafalgar, and Balaclava, and the Death of Sir William Harcourt.

No. III.—A correct list will be found on an advertisement page. Pictures Nos. 2, 5, and 10 appeared to be the most difficult to name.

No. IV.—The proportion of good photographs to the number submitted was less than usual this month. The successful pictures in each class will be reproduced in an early issue. The competitor's name, address, and class must be written on the back of every photograph, please.

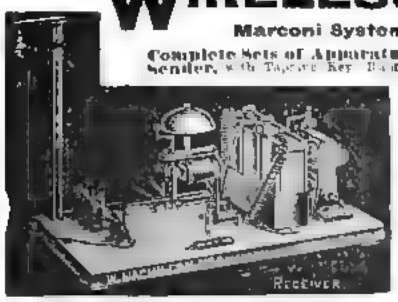
No. V.—The following were among the "Queer Surnames" sent in:—Longbones, Howlings, Twelvetrees, Slapoabbage, Lovelace-Ribbons, Chuckerbutty, Uff, Bairnsfather, Teplady, Badman, Camelhorse, Noyes, Sunspot.

No. VI.—This was a most successful competition, and a very large number of thoughtful and scholarly answers were received. It would be well for competitors to realise that even dictionaries are fallible, and that it is, therefore, well to consult more than one in doubtful cases. In quoting a word of another language care should be taken to spell it correctly. The failure to do this caused the disqualification of many otherwise excellent attempts.

THE COMPETITION EDITOR.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

Marconi System. **Interesting, Instructive, Practical, & Useful.**



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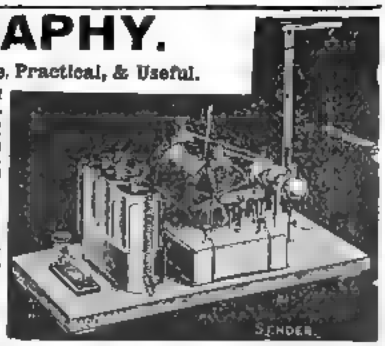
Dear Sirs,—Wireless Apparatus received. Highly delighted. It sends a message further than you advertise it to do.

Yours, C. Marks, Streatley, Berks.



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New Patent THERMOSTATIC BOAT.

THE MOST MARVELLOUS OF MODERN INVENTIONS.

No Dirt. No Smoke. No Danger. Self feeding. Never fails to Work.

It is only necessary to light the lamp and place the boat upon the water, when it will immediately start off at full speed, drawing up its own supply automatically as it goes along. SIZES and PRICES, neatly packed in Boxes:

		per row.
5 inches long, suitable for basin or bath. Goes for 40 minutes each time the lamp is filled		1/6 1/9
9 inches long. Goes for 2 hours		2/6 3/9
do. do.	With Decks ..	3/6 5/6
14 inches long. Decked ..	..	5/6 8/6
18 do. do. ..	.. ..	7/6 9/-

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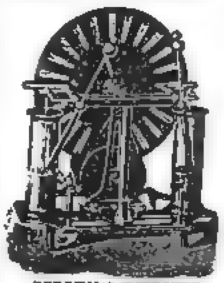
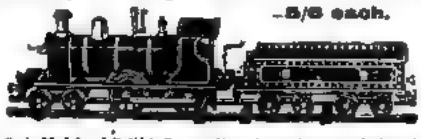


REDDING'S IMPROVED WIMSHURST MACHINES, Superior Quality from 27/6

A great variety of experiments for use with these Machines always in Stock.

REDDING'S NEW SCALE MODELS OF STEAM LOCOMOTIVES, correctly coloured in Four Railways, —5/6 each.



New Scale Models of British Locomotives, beautifully finished in the correct colours of the four Principal Railways. Every model guaranteed. Tested by steam, all fitted with Slide Valve Cylinders, Exhaust through Funnel, &c., &c. Gauge: (1) £1 12s. 6d.; (2) £3 12s.; (3) £4 10s.; (4) £5 10s. Complete with Tenders.

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TORCHES, HOUSE, POCKET, and TRAVELLING LAMPS, ELECTRICAL WATCH STANDS, &c., &c.

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In Morocco Case, Nickel Fittings.

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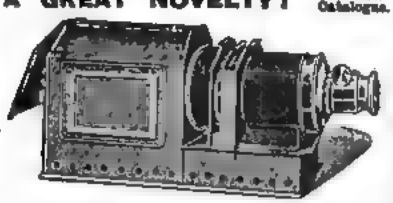
A GREAT NOVELTY! See New Catalogue.



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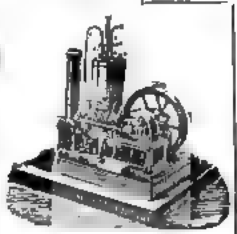
New Spirit Gas Engine for driving small Dynamos, &c., very powerful.



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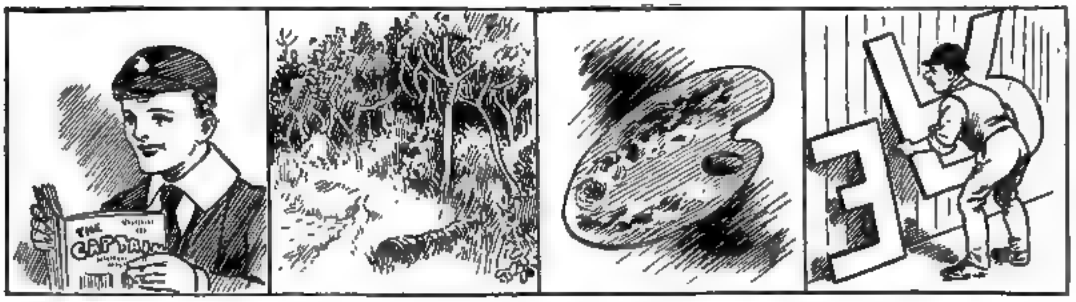
HIDDEN "FOOTBALLERS" COMPETITION.

See "CAPTAIN" COMPETITIONS for DECEMBER, page 278.

All these Hidden Names are of Players in the Front Rank.



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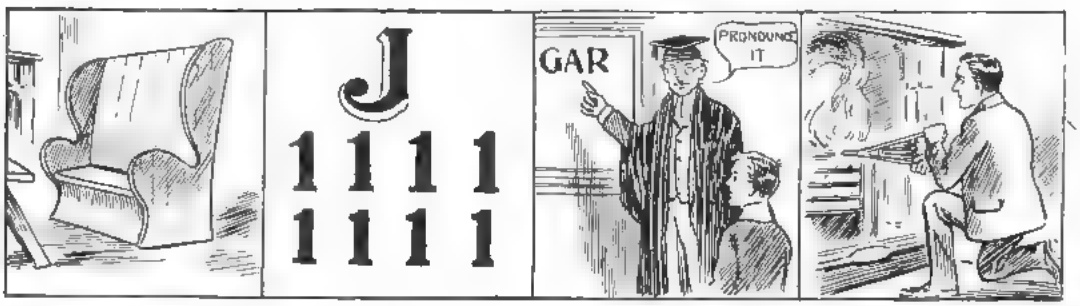

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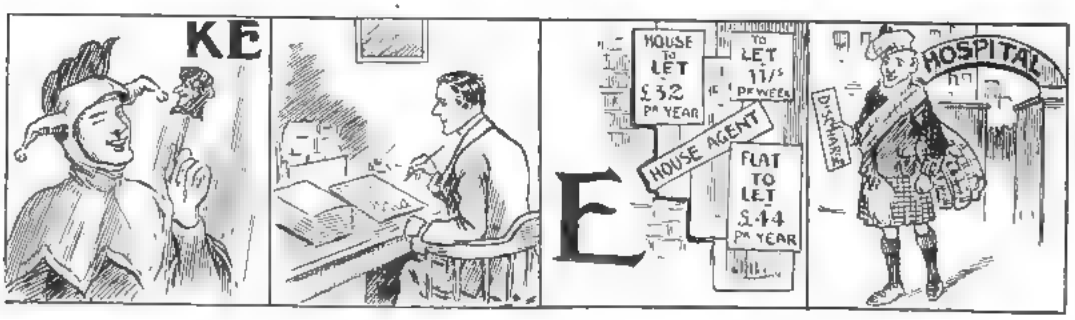

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APPOINTMENTS

Vide August 1904 Issue of THE SUNDAY STRAND.

From the documentary evidence we have perused we are able to endorse the words of "THE QUEEN" that

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BEG *to announce that during the last Seventeen Years a Satisfactory Appointment has been found for every qualified Student of their Secretarial Course for the Sons and Daughters of Gentlemen.*

Owing to the fact that the number of Candidates at the Service Examinations is always enormously in excess of the appointments to be allotted, only a very small proportion can possibly hope to succeed.

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References are kindly permitted to the Clergy, and to past and present Students.

Correspondence and Testimonials for the last seventeen years may be seen by any *bona fide* enquirer, also Press notices in the "Times," "Girl's Realm," "Queen," "Gentlewoman," "Lady," "Woman," "Bayswater Chronicle," "Oxford Review," etc., etc.

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President, F. C. GOULD, Esq. *Vice-Presidents*, THE ARCHDEACON OF LONDON, SIR A. CONAN DOYLE

LEAGUE NOTES FOR DECEMBER, 1904.

THIS page is open every month for the insertion of reports and announcements concerning the numerous branches of the Boys' Empire League. Club secretaries are requested to send such notices to the Organising Secretary, B.E.L., at 56 Ludgate Hill, E.C., by the 1st of every month. Forms for this purpose can be obtained on application to the Secretary.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA: ADELAIDE BRANCH.—This flourishing branch held its second annual social evening in August last. There was a large attendance of members and members' friends. The Secretary (Mr. V. H. Weiss) presented his annual report, which was adopted. On beginning about two years ago the branch consisted of only nine members; now there are eighty-six names on the roll. Six months after the opening of the Adelaide Branch another was formed at Laura, and this has made even greater progress than the former. Early recognising that proper esprit de corps among the members could not be fostered by mere attendance at formal gatherings, this branch formed a Recreation Club, meetings of which are held weekly, when social intercourse, games, music, and reading are indulged in. A Literary and Debating Society has also been formed, and is proving an additional source of interest and pleasure.

BO'NESS, N.B.—Mr. Frank Robertson, of 1 Rosehill-place, writes:—"In my last letter I asked you for some advice on 'fishing,' if you can recollect. You have quite fully answered my question in a way; but I meant *fishing for B.E.L. members*. I am beginning to interest some of my companions, and get them to interest themselves in its doings and benefits, however. How I did this was to get out of them their hobby, and then I commenced about the benefits of the League as regards a fellow's pastimes. In the League he could have a cycle club, which would be far better than 'spinning' alone, &c. So, you see, this is the kind of 'fishing' which is my sole hobby at present."

In this way Mr. Robertson has succeeded in "landing" a dozen new members, which brings the club up to sixteen, and he hopes to "weigh in" more presently. His most taking "baits" appear to be "draughts, dominoes, competitions and prizes, air-gun practice, amateur theatricals (after they get some lady associates), debates, wrestling, throwing the hammer, putting the stone, football, cricket, and a set of boxing gloves." I should also add this go-ahead branch possesses a monthly magazine of its own. Should any of our branch secretaries be at a loss in shaping their programmes with a view to an increase of membership in the New Year, I hope they will take a "fly" leaf out of Mr. Robertson's book.

The Boys' Empire League Official Stamp Exchange has now over 70 members.

Packets of the average value of over £15 are going out monthly. The Colonial department is very strong, and many splendid specimens of Colonial and other stamps are appearing in packets.

Rules and full information post free from W. A. Nixon, General Secretary, 7 Oak Road, Sale, Cheshire; T. W. Thornborrow, London Secretary, 125 Dalling Road, Hammersmith, London, W.; and P. Langton, Colonial and Foreign Secretary, Hayes, Uxbridge.

HOWARD H. SPICER.

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BOYS! YOUR POCKET MONEY SAVED.

Pocket Money goes very quickly when you are buying appliances for your games. Quaker Oats Consumers' Benefit Plan of advertising enables you to obtain them at far below the prices usually charged.

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Quaker Oats Consumers' Benefit Plan will help you save money on hundreds of things you need.

OUR CATALOGUE,
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SEND FOR IT.

All Goods delivered Carriage Paid in Great Britain and Ireland.

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START NOW
by Cutting out this Coupon,
Good until Dec. 12th.
It counts as one White Square when returned with balance of required number cut from front of Quaker Oats packets.

Cut this out at once; it counts as one

To give you a start towards the required number of White Squares, we will receive this as one when returned with balance of required number.

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OPEN DECEMBER 1st.
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3/6, 4/6, 5/6, 7/6 each.
With Slides Complete.
Packing & Carriage, 9d.

CLOCKWORK MOTOR CARS.
1/7, 2/2, 2/8, 3/4.
Postage 4d. each.

FRETWORK OUTFITS.
1/11 per Set.
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Other prices:
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Toys for Boys of all Kinds.

TRAINS COMPLETE.
10d., 1/8, 3/2, 5/11, 11/4.
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Railway Signals, 5d., 10d., 1/7, 2/4. Postage 3d.
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Most Realistic.
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By A. Weintraud and Dr. W. G. Grace.
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